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ITALY

AND

ALIAN LITERATURE.

88180

BY

CHARLES HERBERT, Esq.

Italia mia, benchè'l parlar sia indarno
Alle piaghe mortali,
Che nel bel corpo tuo si spesse veggio,
Piacemi almen, ch'i miei sospir sien quali
Spera 'l Tevere, e l' Arno,
E'l Pò, dove doglioso e grave or seggio.
Rettor del ciel, io cheggio,
Che la pietà che ti condusse in terra,
Ti volga al tuo diletto almo paese.

PETRARCA.

Knowst thou the land where the pale citron grows,
'Mid thicket glooms the golden orange glows,
Where balmy winds from deep blue skies are breath'd,
And myrtles low with laurels proud are wreath'd?
Knowst thou the land?

After Goethe, BY R. W.

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TO

SIR JOHN CAM HOBHOUSE, BART.

&c. &c. &c.

SIR,

WHEN I bethought me of one to whom I might with propriety inscribe my little volume on Italy, the name of HOBHOUSE, intimately associated as it is in the minds of all with that of BYRON, and with one of the noblest poems of modern times, naturally suggested itself to me. In your illustrations of CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE, you have, by your profound and lucid historical investigations, added greatly to the interest of that delightful poem, and are allowed by common consent, to have shown yourself one of the most accomplished scholars and antiquaries of the age.

But it is not only for these admirable researches into her antiquities that Italy is indebted to you; she owes you the farther obligation of having been among the first of English writers, who awakened your countrymen, by the pen of enlightened criticism, to a sense of the manifold charms of her modern literature. From such a benefactor Italy may perhaps, and with reason, expect yet more. Will not he who has so ably pointed out the causes of her decay, and so warmly sympathized in her political degradation, by steadily persevering in those liberal views, which have so honourably marked his public life, add strength to the growing cause of liberty, and thus advance the day when, free and independent, she may take her place among nations?

While I express the high esteem I feel for your public character, and the admiration I entertain for your genius and acquirements as a distinguished cultivator of letters, allow me, Sir, to subscribe myself, most respectfully,

Your obedient humble Servant,

CHARLES HERBERT.

INTRODUCTION.

No country has so constantly occupied the attention of mankind in past ages, none, at present, possesses so many, so various, and so absorbing claims to consideration, as Italy. Other lands attract the curiosity of the traveller and student, for a few peculiar objects of interest: Spain has her Alhambra, beautiful in ruins, and mourning as it were over her departed chivalry, her Moorish recollections and her Gothic heroes; France may boast of her early troubadours, her grand monarchs, and her finished courtiers; Germany looks back with veneration on her bold reformers, her warlike feudal barons, and the castellated memorials of the middle ages; England refers to her spirit-stirring and successful struggles for constitutional liberty, and her influence in colonizing and spreading civiliza-

tion over the earth; Greece, alas! robbed of her precious relics, and scarcely rescued from the hands of barbarians, can only sigh over the scenes that are immortal; but no land, however interesting in itself, like Italy, throws a chain over the affections and memories of all: on her classic and favoured soil alone every taste, every passion, every feeling of the mind finds ample means of gratification.

The traveller, imbued with the spirit of ancient Rome, here beholds the scenes depicted in her poets and historians; the antiquarian has here a hundred fields of research not yet half explored, and the promise of the richest harvest to his well-directed enterprise; the student, absorbed in the captivating pursuits of literature, will here trace its lusty birth, its flourishing youth, and its advance into almost perfect manhood. The admirer of art is at home in Italy alone; here only can he study the most noble remains of Grecian art, here find the chisel of the early Greeks worthily bestowed in the hands of an Angelo and a Canova, and the fabled splendours of Apelles and Zeuxis, rivalled by the rich realities of Raphael and Titian.

Whatever the prevailing bias of the mind, in Italy it finds an object suited to its indulgence: the devotee even, will find in Italy much of the spirit of the antique Catholic times, and the relics of saints and martyrs, are here preserved in abundance to claim his veneration. In a word, all, from the philosophical historian to the mere man of pleasure, in Italy, find equal means of endless entertainment; the one here roams at large over the chief fields of antient, nay, of modern story; access is easily obtained to libraries stored with the rarest treasures; the soil is strewed for him with the monuments of genius,—every hill, every plain, every river, speaks to him of the illustrious dead. The other, in her balmy air, her blue and sunny skies, her unruffled seas, the fascinations of her daughters, their soft dark eyes, and melodious voices, and her pantomimic and poetic people, finds constant and never-tiring sources of enjoyment.

No wonder then that Italy has been the theme of so many poets, historians, and travellers, that Shakspeare, Schiller, Otway, Radcliff, Goethe, Byron, and unnumbered other bards, should have

drawn from her as from an inexhaustible mine of inspiration, enriching their respective muses with her stores, and in return, enshrining her in their immortal verse with ever-fresh and ever-varying charms. To Italy have the curious of all nations in all ages thronged. No country has furnished more food for reflection to the philosopher, none has been so often described by the traveller. Many of these and their accounts, according to the laws of mortality, have long passed into the sea of oblivion, but many still float on the surface of the current that is tending thither. We still turn with pleasure to the classic pages of Addison, to the amusing letters of Moore, to the saturnine strictures of Smollet, the refined criticism of Forsyth, the eloquent disquisitions of Eustace, and to the learned and copious details of the French traveller La Lande, and the republican Dupaty; or coming to more recent times, we find infinite amusement in the pages of the lively Lady Morgan, in the agreeable diary of Mathews, the impartial anonymous volumes, entitled "Italy as it is," the well-informed and judicious Simond, the melodious

Song of Rogers, and last, though not least, that painter of scenery and manners, the epicurean Beckford. These names, and a few more such as these, will probably long survive. But if memory alone supplies so copious a list of popular writers, who have all ably, after their several manners, wielded the pen, is it not natural to suppose that the subjects of which they treat is exhausted? And those, indeed, may be pardoned who exclaim—why needs another to run over this familiar and well-trodden path? It certainly does require no small degree of courage, to employ the pencil at this late hour upon a scene which has been treated by so many celebrated artists. But even as the primary tones in music may be varied to infinity, and each in itself from the soft stops of the well-toned organ is delightful, so may the particulars in the history of Italy, past and present, be viewed under different aspects to infinity, and the surpassing beauty of the theme enable it to stand the ordeal even of unskilful handling. Italy may be aptly enough likened to a beautiful female, the generous patroness of the

arts, who has most kindly and condescendingly sat to all sorts of limners, experienced and unpractised, of all ages and of all countries, some portion of whose surpassing loveliness has, somehow or other, found its way into all the pictures, though often extremely unlike one another, and in various instances, perhaps, bearing no great resemblance to the original.

The writer of the following brief sketches has not the vanity to enter into competition with the mighty names that have gone before him; his claims to notice rest on different and humbler grounds. Former travellers have treated, according to their various tastes, of the antiquities, of the fine arts, and of the manners and politics of Italy; as yet, none has entered much into the literature or history of that country. Perhaps the difficulty of amalgamating information on such extensive topics, with the current theme of a book of travels, may explain the reason why nothing of this nature has hitherto come before the public. Our English writers are prepared, by the whole course of their early studies, to enter on the consideration of Italy

as she was in ancient times; but the literature of modern Italy forms no regular or integral part of the education of British youth, and this is therefore very commonly overlooked by our tourists. We might take shame to ourselves for our neglect of this, perhaps the most interesting of all the fields in which the progress of the human mind can be traced after the revival of letters. At so low an ebb is the general estimate of the worth of Italian literature in England, that it is not without certain misgivings as to the success of his labours, that the miscellaneous information which follows, has been collected on the literature of Italy in the sixteenth century, which was its most flourishing æra, and that the rapid review of its former and present state, has been composed. Besides these purely literary notices, the reader will find a hasty glance at the progress of the sciences in Italy during the seventeenth and subsequent century, which the writer believes will go far to show that sufficient importance has not been attached to all we owe to Italy for her contributions to the stores of human knowledge. The two last chapters contain an abstract of the

history of the most famous of the early Italian republics, and of the lives of the most celebrated among the Roman Pontiffs; and a Catalogue Raisonné of the most eminent Italian writers is added, by way of appendix.

To Italian scholars it would be presumptuous to suppose that anything of novelty is here offered; possibly there is little that can interest. It is not, therefore, to such an advanced class of readers that this work is addressed; its intention is rather to serve as a useful companion to the guide book, and a kind of introduction to Italian literature. For those who incline to enter farther on the flowery and fascinating fields it possesses, and as yet know not the pure fountain-heads at which to slake their thirst, the following guides can be confidently recommended: the enlarged and elaborate work of Ginguéné[1], on the literature of Italy,—the literature of the south by Sismondi,—the invaluable, though

[1] Ginguéné Histoire Litteraire d'Italie—Sismondi de la Litterature du midi de l'Europe—Tiraboschi Storia della Letteratura Italiana—Bettinelli del risorgimento d'Italia—Crescimboni Istoria della volgar Poesia—Denina Vicende della Letteratura—Gravina della Ragion Poetica—Corniani e Ugoni I secoli della Letteratura Italiana.

dry, researches of Tiraboschi,—Bettinelli on the rise of Italian literature,—Crescimbeni on the history of Italian poetry,—Denina on the revolutions in the literature of Italy—Baretti's Italian library—Gravina's criticisms on poetry—and the excellent work of Corniani and Ugoni, which contains, in an agreeable and compressed form, much that is valuable in Tiraboschi and other writers. The English reader will peruse with the greatest pleasure, (if it be not an enjoyment in which he has already indulged,) the different works of Roscoe, Hobhouse's illustrations of the fourth canto of Childe Harolde, (a work that presents an admirable union of profound erudition and refined taste,) Stebbing's lives of the Italian poets,—the beautiful essays of Foscolo on Petrarch and Dante,—and finally many excellent articles, replete with information on Italy, in the Foreign Quarterly Review. For historical details it is sufficient to mention the names of Muratori, Sismondi, Denina, Bossi, and Botta, and a very entertaining as well as instructive recent publication, the Romance of History, by Mac Farlane.

To be diffuse the prescribed limits did not allow; and in studying brevity, perhaps that worst of all faults of writing has been committed, according to Voltaire, that of being uninteresting, "tous les genres sont bons, hors des genres ennuyeux." To obviate such a defect as much as possible, a slight account of personal travel, has been interwoven through the body of the work. In short, no longer to detain the reader on this egotistical subject, the writer hopes, that if he has done anything useful, however small in amount this may be, his faults being viewed with an indulgent eye, will be pardoned, should he be found to have failed in the more difficult task of being also amusing.

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ERRATA.

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— 244, — 12, *for* Galliani *read* Galiani
— 308, — 8, *for* L'Ammalata *read* L'Ammalato
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— 358, — 2, *for* La Cortiginia *read* La Cortigiana
— 358, — 13, *for* Died 1569 *read* Died 1549
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— 366, — 2 from bottom, *for* Nicolò *read* Niccolò
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ITALY

AND

ITALIAN LITERATURE.

CHAPTER I.

Departure from Paris—Meeting the late Dauphin—Dijon under the Dukes of Burgundy—Remarks upon Lyons—the late insurrectionary movements of the working classes—the Hotel Dieu—superiority of the French over English medical instruction—the injudicious restrictions of the French upon commerce.

With the delightful feelings of hope, that so readily possess the youthful mind, and those indescribable sensations of joy, excited by the prospect of soon beholding scenes associated with my fondest schoolboy recollections, and hallowed by the religious respect they claim as the cradle of the Christian faith, I started from the French metropolis for Italia la Bella.

Little of interest arises to awaken the attention of the traveller, through the monotonous plains of central France. The only circumstance that occurred of an interesting nature, was the meeting, at the outskirts of the town of Tonnere, the unfortunate Dauphin. He was then on his return to Paris, after inspecting the celebrated expedition to Algiers. His arrival was announced by a single avant-courier, and his whole suite consisted of but two carriages, his object being to travel *incog.*, from a pretended unwillingness, at that critical juncture, to put the nation to unnecessary expense.

We had descended from our vehicle to mount an acclivity, when we encountered the royal carriage; only one of our party recognised and saluted the Dauphin; upon which, with a seeming eagerness to be known, he returned the salutation in the most affable manner. There was a joyousness in his countenance, a light air of gaiety, and a seeming wish to please, which left a very favourable impression. No wonder he should have rejoiced within himself; he had just reviewed one of the best armies that France, for a long period, had sent forth,—

those happy fields, of which he one day looked to be Lord and Master, were passing in rapid succession before him. Alas! how deceitful were the thoughts that the smile on his countenance expressed; could "coming events have cast their shadows before," how would that brow have been shaded with gloom and sorrow, at that just retribution with which the folly of his house was so soon to be visited.

There is nothing to break the traveller's reverie, till he arrives near Dijon, to which there runs a canal agreeably wooded on each side. Dijon, for a French country town, is peculiarly neat and cleanly. The town-hall, and square in front of it, are the chief ornaments of the place. It was here that the famous states of Burgundy used formerly to assemble; and a wing is still preserved of the public palace, which once lodged the warlike princes of that ancient dukedom, who make such an important figure in the wars of France and Germany, down to the overthrow of Charles the Bold.

Chalons has a tolerable inland commerce, sup-

ported by the canal to Lyons. Macon is only remarkable for its wine, and the view from its bridge, on a clear day, of the distant Alps. But Lyons has been, and will always continue, an object of great interest to the traveller.

This celebrated town, called Lugdunum by the Romans, being seated at the junction of two noble rivers, the Saone, and the Rhone, where the passage is not difficult, was the scene of many a sanguinary contest during the Roman Commonwealth; and under the emperors was signalized by the dreadful slaughter made upon its Christian inhabitants, headed by the martyr Pothinus,—a massacre which has never been surpassed in extent, save by that perpetrated by cruelty and infidelity, during the French revolution. Well may we exclaim with the poet, in connexion with the name of Lyons:

> "Blood hath been shed 'ere now i' the olden time,
> Ere human statute purged the gentle weal,
> Ay, and since too, murders have been performed—
> Too terrible for the ear."

Much destruction of life and property has also lately marked the insurrectionary movements of

the lower classes against their unoffending masters, arising from the general stagnation of trade, and the disappointment of the hopes, too eagerly entertained, of the reforms and ameliorations held out by the present government.

The finest building in Lyons, is, without exception, the Hotel Dieu, more like a king's palace than a hospital. The internal arrangements are admirably conducted, and a good school of medicine is attached to the institution. Too great praise cannot be bestowed on the laudable anxiety which the French governments, since the first revolution, have displayed in promoting the interests of science. The admirable manner in which medical instruction, in particular, is conducted at Paris, presents by no means a flattering comparison for us, if we consider the little patronage extended to it by the government in England. In France, merit is not only rewarded when found out, but sought after and stimulated to exertion. The situations of *interne* and *externe*, that is, of pupils with a salary, are open to public competition, and every office, up to that of the professor's chair, is the fair

reward of successful talent: the great cheapness of education brings the means of knowledge within reach of the poorest student; an unlimited number of dissections, ample opportunities for practical chemistry, and all the other avenues to science are equally accessible. What a contrast to England! where money and family connexions would seem to be the principal keys to knowledge and success. If indigent merit, in England, finally triumphs, it certainly owes nothing to public or government protection. It is matter for curious reflection, that though the French, owing to the facilities we have mentioned, are much better grounded in medical science than we are, yet, that our practice is attended with more successful results, particularly in acute diseases; in chronic, probably, the reverse holds good. The explanation of this anomalous circumstance would seem to depend upon the French striving to cultivate medicine as a pure science, with mathematical precision, and making no allowance for its imperfections, which are never lost sight of by the good sense of the English. As an instance of the views the French entertain, I

recollect conversing with a celebrated French pathologist upon the practice of only giving one remedy at a time, urging that a judicious combination might be more certain in its results, and more beneficial to the patient. "Comment donc," exclaimed the learned professor, "if we did that, how could we advance the interests of science?" Doubtless, in accordance with such principles, there has been a host of victims, in French hospitals, immolated on the altars of knowledge; and probably, to judge from the national character, many a noble disinterested Frenchman, like the expiring soldier, who threw up his dissevered arm, shouting "Vive Napoleon," would exclaim, "Vive la science," while dying to promote it.

In the silk trade too, the most important manufacture at Lyons, there is an elementary school to instruct young boys in drawing, and designing patterns: a knowledge which proves so useful in after life. From this school, the different manufacturers choose the most promising pupils, and provide for them in their own establishments. How much wanted are such institutions in Great Britain!

What great suffering would merit, in its severe struggles at the commencement, be spared, if a well-regulated encouragement were held out, as there is in every department of knowledge in France. So far our neighbours are entitled to our approbation; but we cannot extend the same commendations to the unwise restrictions they still continue upon commerce, or to the protection they afford some branches of industry to the injury of others; giving to the iron trade, in which France never can excel, injudicious bounties, to the prejudice of the wine trade, in which, if encouraged, nature has enabled her to defy competition.

CHAPTER II.

A pleasant Sail down the Rhone in an open Boat—A Dispute—The Author consulted—Disapproves of Hostilities—National Antipathies fast declining.

THE enjoyment I promised myself in the society of a French acquaintance, in a sail down the Rhone, and the advantage of having its interesting scenery pointed out by a native of the place, induced me to embark in an open boat for Avignon. Without the high cultivation, and garden-like scenery that distinguishes the banks of our great rivers,—our Clyde, our Forth, and our Thames,—the Rhone presents views on either side, which possess more interest from the recollections of history. Ruins of castles, and toppling remains of convents, every now and then rising on the steep sides, arrest

attention, carrying the mind back to the middle ages.

The Roman Circus at Vienne, the Monument to Pius VI. at Valence, the celebrated vine-producing slopes of the Côte Rotié, and Hermitage, and the dangerous rapidity of the current under the bridge of St. Esprit, are the objects most worthy of observation. The impetuosity of the Rhone is every where so remarkable, that the stream alone carries a vessel rapidly down, whereas, to ascend, requires the strong force of steam, or the power of many horses.

During the voyage I was much amused with a contentious broil that occurred between a Frenchman and an Englishman; and exhibited a striking indication of the antipathy which even at this time exists between the two nations. The provocation was, as often happens, slight enough; the sail of the boat happening to strike the Frenchman, while Captain S., of the English navy, was stepping on deck, was sufficient to excite the wrath, and call forth the gross abuse of the irritable Gaul. The patient Englishman made a calm and short reply,

but was meditating revenge, whilst his opponent appeared to think of going no farther than mere harmless abuse; a characteristic mode of fighting among a certain class of Frenchmen. A countryman and friend of Captain S. advised him to proceed to immediate hostilities; or, that being impracticable, surrounded as he was by Frenchmen, to challenge his foe on shore, if he had any pretensions to the rank of a gentleman; if not, to give him the reward of a clown. Being called upon for my opinion, I declared,—

> "I should be much for open war, O peers,
> As not behind in hate,"

were I not aware of the impropriety of taking any more serious notice of the matter. I then pointed out that the irascible Frenchman was not entitled to be viewed in the light of a gentleman, and to inflict any more summary punishment, would not only be impossible, protected as he would be by his friends, but might entail a very dangerous chance-medley—an important consideration to me, his very dear countryman and adviser. This

Nestorean counsel having made a due impression, fortified as it was, doubtless, by the consideration of the great convenience of travelling with a whole skin, the affair went no further.

It must be a subject gratifying to the philosopher to observe, that this absurd feeling of national antipathy is fast wearing away, and that in its place, a growing disposition to friendship, based on mutual interests, is spreading among the two most civilized nations of the world, who should in future contend in the fields of science and civilization, instead of shedding each other's blood, and wasting treasures, not to be supplied but by the industry of centuries.

CHAPTER III.

Avignon—Its ancient Recollections—The Popes at Avignon—Laura and Petrarch—The poetical region of Provence—The Provençal Bards—Geoffry Rudel and the Countess of Tripoli—The Countess of Champagne and the Courts of Love—A short review of Petrarch's Life and Sonnets—Gibbon's opinion of Petrarch's love for Laura confuted.

I TURN to a scene which recalls far different recollections, Avignon, the once renowned seat of pontifical splendour and priestly luxury. What a glorious circle of beauties and wits—the Colonnas and the Lauras, must have once adorned that gay, but immoral court, to the fascinations of whose enchanting society, Petrarch, in the hey-dey of his youth and vanity, completely surrendered himself. But what a sad picture has he drawn in his maturer years, of the vices that stained the pontifical ermine; of the avarice of Clement V. who

revelled in the spoils of the Templars; of the still greater exactions of John XXII. and of the dissoluteness and venality combined of Clement VI. The former splendour of Avignon has long since vanished, and little remains to remind us of what it once was, but the ancient palace of the Popes, now turned into a barrack, and the dismantled tomb of Laura.

On quitting Avignon, the country displays all the charms of a southern climate; the olive, the mulberry tree, and the rich tints of the orange, first attract attention;—the soft eyes of the village girls, and the happy countenances of the shepherds tending their flocks, bring us back to the days of romance, to the minstrels of Provence, and her wandering troubadours.

Leaving to critics to decide, the question whence this early minstrelsy arose,—whether it sprang indigenous to the soil,—how far it had a gothic origin,—or whether it was transmitted from the Moors, through the early commercial intercourse with Spain, the more probable opinion, and what farther improvement it derived from the East,—

that primitive nurse of the imagination, during the Crusades—it is sufficient here to remark, the beneficial influence it exerted upon civilization, from its rise in the tenth century; and to observe how deeply, during its most flourishing eras, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Italian poetry is to it indebted for its growth and embellishment.

What charming times were those, when courts of love were erected in every great city; where some sovereign beauty, surrounded by her liege and loving subjects, decked in all the splendour of chivalry and gaiety, gave her final decision on the most intricate questions of that obscure and difficult subject, love, having previously heard the opposing arguments of two most profound and poetical advocates on the disputed point! How many broken hearts might be saved in the present day, had we still these courts of love, where speedy justice was to be obtained,—instead of the delays in our never-ending *courts* of equity. What an amusing spectacle it must have been, to have heard two rival bards contend for victory, in these Tensons, and seen the victor crowned with laurel by the hands of the

fair judge!—Still is the memory preserved of the unfortunate Geoffry Rudel, who dying for love of the Countess of Tripoli, made a voyage to Africa to behold her, and having obtained her pitying smile, expired happy and contented;—of the famous Berenger;—of our own romantic Richard Cœur de Lion, and his faithful Blondel;—of the celebrated Countess of Champagne, who decided, in a solemn sitting, that the previous lover had rights superior to the husband, on the assumption that the vows of love, as the elder brother, should always take precedence of those of marriage; a deliberate decision, which a queen of France, when referred to, would not reverse;—and last, though not least, of the good King Réné, who preferred the society of the Muses to the possession of a kingdom.

However well these famous codes may square with the dictates of gallantry, from the decisions that have come down to us, we are sorry to confess, that their precedents were not always drawn from the moral law; neither was the Bible the statute-book to which they invariably referred; and however learned and ingeniously they quoted from Scrip-

ture and the schoolmen, their references and conceits often savoured not a little of profanity, and still more of absurdity: but we should not be ungrateful; since we must acknowledge that Provençal poetry had its use in civilizing mankind, and opening the way for Italian literature. Dante is full of admiration of their masters, "Il famoso Arnoldo," and Vidal; and none more so, than the poet who, through the associations of Laura and Vaucluse, may be called the peculiar bard of Provence. While passing through the scenes so illustrated by his muse, it may not be inappropriate briefly to notice the life and writings of this celebrated man.

Francesco Petrarcha was born at Arezzo, in 1304, of respectable parents, who were banished from Florence, as belonging to the proscribed party. The fugitives first sought refuge in different parts of Italy; but sailed, at last, for Marseilles, and finally chose the vicinity of Avignon for their residence, with a view to economy in their reduced estate. It was then that their little son saw the fountain of Vaucluse for the first time; and although only nine years old, its romantic scenery left such

an impression on his youthful fancy, that neither time, nor the cares of the world could ever after obliterate the recollection.

His father being poor, and not being able to support him without a profession, sent him to Montpellier to study the law; but Cicero and Virgil were the only *law*-books, whose pages he ever consulted. It is related, that his father seeing these authors in his hands, instead of finding him, as he expected, poring over the pandects of Justinian, was so enraged, that he threw the *ancients* into the fire: upon which, the young poet raised such cries for his favourite authors, that the father was moved to compassion, rescued the *martyrs* from the flames, and restored them to their youthful admirer.

After the death of this indulgent parent, he gave himself up to poetry, and mingled in the captivating, but corrupt society of Avignon. Besides the dangerous intimacies he then contracted, there were others of a very different character—John and James Colonna, both equally distinguished for their patriotism and their love of letters, and Laura,

the guiding star that was to determine his future destiny, he also met at this court of pleasure. Laura, the wife of Hugues de Sade, of Avignon, as all the world knows, was graced with a highly accomplished mind, and possessed of exemplary virtue, and of great beauty. The celebrated meeting with this lady at the church of St. Clare on Holy Monday, the green colour of her gown, the compassionate colour of her eyes, it is to be presumed, of a different hue, the love at first sight, the following this "light from heaven" afterwards in the street, to admire the majesty of her walk, and the grace of her person, are now familiar to all poetical readers and lovers. There are few ladies of the particulars of whose beauty we have more faithful details. None has ever had such a writer for her biographer.

Notwithstanding this passion engrossed much of his time and thoughts, Petrarch exerted all the great eloquence he was master of, to persuade the Pope to return to Rome, and use the influence of his high station, for the benefit of the deserted city. These laudable exertions failed of success, in consequence

of the apathy induced by the enervating dissipations of Avignon. If poetical renown, however, could be any consolation to the disappointed patriot, few ever reaped so rich a harvest of fame. His name had already become celebrated by some smaller poems: but as soon as a part of the long Latin epic entitled Africa became known, he was looked upon as a kind of superior being. Princes vied with each other in paying him honour; the enlightened Robert of Naples, after publicly examining him for the poetical crown, paid him more respect than he could to a brother monarch; and Rome and Paris contended which should first offer him the laurel.

This moment was, doubtless, the happiest and proudest of his life; the rest of his days were overshadowed with sorrow and despair. The first event that led to this distressful state of mind, was the disappointment of his hopes in the tribune Rienzi. Petrarch had a truly Roman spirit, which breathes so pathetically in his odes. on Rienzi, and the calamities of Italy.—The successful overthrow of the tyranny of the nobles, and the estab-

lishment of a free republic, were heroic actions, that augured so well for the future, that the poet conceived the highest opinion of this regenerating Roman. But alas! these enthusiastic hopes were soon blasted by the capricious tyranny which sudden and extraordinary success generated in a vain mind, and which, after a while, conducted to the imprisonment and death of the ambitious demagogue.

The next misfortune that threw a cloud over his days, was the death of Laura, who was swept off by the plague of Florence. The only solace Petrarch experienced in her irreparable loss, was in writing tender sonnets to her memory. The sonnets are divided into two books. Those of the first were written before her death. In these, the features, the thoughts, the person of his Laura, her minutest action in his presence, her bland encouragement to the depression, her dignified mode of repelling the importunity of her lover, are expressed with that truth of colouring which passion alone could supply.

Notwithstanding, the celebrated Gibbon has expressed his incredulity of Petrarch's love for Laura;

being unable to reconcile to his philosophic notions, how a person could feel a passion for a woman whose charms were gone, and constitution impaired by having been the mother of a numerous offspring. Without insisting upon first impressions being indelible, we may be allowed to dispute the authority of the philosopher of Lausanne, as it is to be presumed that he did not devote quite so much time and research to unfold the mysteries of the heart, as to elucidate the obscurities of history. Others have taken Laura for the object of a pure Platonic affection, or a mere personification of morality. It is to be feared, that very few could express such ecstacy for virtue, as Petrarch does, according to this supposition, for its Sign, Laura.

But Tiraboschi and Foscolo are more judicious critics, who think that his immortal sonnets are full of incontrovertible proofs of the sincerity, of the constancy, and the violence of his passion, containing, as they do, so many delphic lines, which could never appeal so powerfully to all hearts, were they not inspired by a true passion. Who can read these beautiful lines:—

"Ye waters clear and fresh, to whose bright wave
She all her beauties gave,
Sole of her sex in my impassioned mind;
Thou sacred branch so graced,
With sighs even now retraced,
On whose smooth shaft, her heavenly form reclined;
Herbage and flowers that bent the robe beneath,
Whose graceful folds imprest her pure angelic breast[1];"

without believing the bard love-inspired. Who but he "who felt the wound," could give the

[1] "Chiare, fresche, e dolci acque,
Ove le belle membra,
Pose colei che sola a me par donna;
Gentil ramo ove piacque,
Coh sospir mi remembra!
A lei di fare al bel fianco colonna;
Erba, e fior che la gonna,
Leggiadra ricoverse,
Con l'angelico seno."

The following well-known passage, flowing spontaneously from the heart of a poet, of a very different age and nation, the fervour of whose passion cannot be questioned, and in which a resemblance naturally springs from similarity of subject and situation, may be cited as an additional corroboration of the genuineness of Petrarch's love.

"Ayr gurgling kiss'd his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thick'ning green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twined am'rous round the raptured scene.

following description, when oppressed with melancholy:

"All solitary, lost in thought, I stray,
Measuring with slow, slack step the plains most drear;

"Her golden tresses on the wind she threw;
Which twisted them in many a beauteous braid
And in her fine eyes burning glances play'd,
With lovely light, which now they seldom show

"Not like a mortal's did her step appear;
Angelic was her form; her voice, methought,
Pour'd more than human accents on the ear[2]."

"The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The bird sang love on every spray;
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of winged day:

"That sacred hour can I forget?
Can I forget the hallow'd grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love."

[1] "Solo, e pensoso, i più deserti campi,
Vo misurando a passi tardi, e lenti:
Erano i capei d'oro all' aura sparsi,
Che'n mille dolci nodi gli avvolgea:
El vago lume oltra misura ardea,
Di quei begli occhi ch' or ne son sì scarsi."

[2] "Non era l'andar suo cosa mortale,
Ma d'angelica forma, e le parole
Sonavan altro, che par voce umana."

Again, could any one but a poet, impressed with the deepest love, see, and so beautifully express, the changes that his mistress's countenance underwent, at the sudden departure of her lover:

"A tender paleness stealing o'er her cheek,
Veil'd her sweet smile as 'twere a passing cloud."

"Her lovely looks with sadness downward bent,
In silence to my fancy seem'd to say,
Who calls my faithful friend so far away[1]."

Finally, if a disease is to be known by its symptoms, no physician could have given a more just nosological description of the malady of the heart, than the patient himself has so well expressed, in these very accurate details:

"If on the brow each thought be pictured clear;
If words half uttered from the tongue retire,
As apprehension or as shame inspire;
If on the cheek the violets' hue to wear;

[1] "Quel vago impallidir ch'il dolce riso,
D'un' amorosa nebbia ricoverse."

"Chinava a terra il bel guardo gentile,
E tacendo dicea, (com' a me parve);
Chi m' allontana il mio fedele amico?"

If dearer than oneself another prove;
If constantly to weep, as much to sigh,
Nursing the pangs, the griefs, the wrath of love,
To burn when distant, and to freeze when nigh:
If such fond causes doom me to despair,
Though death be mine, thine is the guilt, my fair [1].

Indeed, the whole life of Petrarch was coloured by this one absorbing passion. In vain he travelled to banish the recollections of it: it followed him like a spirit, wherever he went. In vain, he buried himself in the calm seclusion of Vaucluse: the vision of Laura arose to him in its deepest solitudes. Foscolo has truly said, that the beautiful thoughts of Petrarch, were the sudden inspirations of deep passion; first carelessly expressed in the letters to his friends, and afterwards, sometimes a long period intervening, carefully put into verse, and revised with

[1] "Se nella fronte ogni pensier dipinto,—
Od in voce interrotte appena intese:
Or da paura, or da vergogna offese,
S' un pallor di viola e d'amor tinto;
S' aver altrui piu caro che se stesso:
Se lagrimar e sospirar mai sempre
Pascendosi di duol, d'ira e d'affanno
S' arder da lunge ed agghiacciar da presso,
Son le cagion ch' amando i' mi distempre,
Vostro Donna, 'l peccato e mio fia 'l danno."

the greatest diligence. The quality of genius, as is justly observed, consisting chiefly in the power of vividly recalling strong and by-gone impressions. Hence, we may reconcile the extraordinary polish of his verses with the supposition of the reality of his love.

It may, at first, appear surprising, that out of so many imitators, not one has ever come near the elegant style of Petrarch. Even the great Tasso himself, is cold in his sonnets, compared with the bard of Vaucluse. But Petrarch's love of learning, at whose newly-discovered fountains he was one of the first of moderns to drink; his deep piety; the melancholy tinge which his anomalous connexion with Laura threw over him, and an extreme fastidiousness of taste, joined to a wonderful susceptibility of nature, are so many particulars in his life and mental constitution, which may serve to explain how he alone of all poets has yet succeeded in depicting the history of an unhappy passion with matchless purity and elegance.

CHAPTER IV.

Embarks at Marseilles for Genoa—Narrow escape from shipwreck off the coast of Italy—lands at Finale—Travels with a Genoese noble to Genoa—Andrea Doria—notice of the ancient Genoese Republic—Lord W. Bentinck—the late King and Queen at the theatre—the reigning King Charles Albert—His popularity with the Piedmontese—The improving state of Sardinia.

Mr. ———, of the very respectable mercantile house of ——, at Genoa, to the restoration of whose health I was the fortunate means of contributing, offered to join our party in a sailing vessel to Genoa. We had soon cause to repent of having placed confidence in Italian sailors, for scarcely had we cleared the harbour of Marseilles, and beheld off Toulon, part of the Algerine fleet under sail—a very fine spectacle—than the wind began to blow freshly on our stern. This, so far from causing alarm, gave us merely hopes of a speedy

termination to our voyage. The isles of Hieres, so famous for oranges, soon came in sight.

The sun now began to descend, but without any splendour in his setting rays, which dimmed greatly the fine views the opposite coasts presented. Though we had little apprehension for the fate of the coming night, still, the general appearance of the sky was not such as to remove every doubt of its issue. The sun as he went down was enveloped in clouds, which becoming denser and denser, the horizon at length assumed a dark and threatening aspect. The wind at the same time began to freshen, and blowing full in our sails, bore us along with extraordinary speed. In the idea that it would fall on the approach of night, and buoyed up with the elastic spirits of youth, we even went so far in our temerity, as to chide our prudent captain for taking in sail. Our worthy Palinurus, though not the most skilful navigator in the world, had, however, sufficient sagacity to forsee the coming gale. He began to assume a blustering air, and ventured upon a few Italian oaths, which, compared to the manner of a British sailor when

roused, appeared very like mock heroic. "*Il vento,*" to use his expressions, would become "*multo fresco ;*" and he insisted upon our going down to the cabin. The result proved how just the prediction was; for we soon heard the spray washing the deck, and the waves lashing the crazy sides of the vessel in such a manner, that it seemed as if the first dead stroke she encountered would be sufficient to sink her.

Wrapt up in these gloomy anticipations, all of a sudden we heard a crash. Upon inquiry, we learnt that the mizenmast had snapt in twain. This misfortune arose from the tardiness of our sailors in easing off their canvass on being struck by a sudden squall. Indeed, had it not been for the intrepidity of a young American, the little vessel would have been inevitably capsized; but he, hearing the noise, rushed on deck, and, by letting go the rope which confined the heavy sail of our remaining mast, succeeded in bringing her head to the wind, and righting her.

The next loss we suffered was our boat, which caught by an engulphing wave, would, probably,

have carried the bark along with it to the bottom, had not the connecting ropes been promptly cut. Wishing to know the worst, we went on deck. A curious scene presented itself: the sailors on their knees, alternately crying, praying, and striking their breasts, had abandoned all care of the vessel. What a contrast to British sailors in a similar situation! The captain, unmindful of his duty, by frequently exclaiming "tutto e perduto," (all is lost,) inspired his men, if it were possible, with additional terrors. To add to the horrors of our situation, the night was, except at intervals, impenetrably dark; when the huge billows which, every now and then, rose almost over our bark, appeared like a dark veil drawn around us. My fellow travellers, standing as we all did, on the brink of a watery grave, displayed much greater self-possession than the Italians. Whether it was that we still entertained hope of safety, through not comprehending the full danger of our position, or that we had more courage, I know not; but certainly we conducted ourselves in a very handsome manner, and at least kept our fears quietly lodged in our own breasts.

I recollect asking my more experienced companion when we should reach shore. "God only knows," was the reply; "to-morrow, perhaps, if we *ever* reach it. 'Oh never will sun that morrow see.' I certainly shall not soon forget how that emphatic word *ever*, fell upon my ear. On another occasion, this gentleman displayed his habits of cleanliness—the ruling passion strong in death—by desiring the cabin boy to remove something offensive that was near him, who most significantly made answer, "Ah, Signore, non importa," (it is of no consequence,) "all will soon be clean enough."

Fortunately for us, our steersman showed himself to be not without some skill; and by the helm, and a temporary foresail, managed to humour the waves, and keep the vessel driving before the wind. In the expectation that the gale would subside on the approach of morning, we were all anxiously waiting for its appearance. And no sooner did the dawn break, than the wind and waves fell. What eager looks the rising light discovered in our shivering sailors, on the look out for land! At length land was descried at about 10

miles distant, for which we made with a slow and steady sail. We hoisted a flag of distress, and were rejoiced to perceive our signal soon answered from the shore, by seeing a fishing smack coming to our relief, which conveyed us, to our perfect content, to the small harbour of Finale.

From Savona, a favourite sea bathing resort, we were conveyed to Genoa, by the public diligence, in very promiscuous society: a Genoese nobleman, a nurse, and a gardener. The manners of the first were certainly refined; his dress, which was somewhat motley, detracted from his appearance, so that unless vouched for on good authority, it would have been difficult to recognize the man of rank; but on further acquaintance, the manners of the polished gentleman broke through his slovenly disguise; and nothing could have been more obliging than the manner in which he detailed to us the local history of the various country seats that lay on our route. His mind appeared endowed with all that active energy, acquired probably in those busy mercantile pursuits, which the Genoese nobles do not disdain to follow, unlike their listless

and vain brethren of the south. The only thing that detracted, in our estimation, from his claims to good taste, was, the too great partiality he felt for the little painted villas that on each side ostentatiously displayed themselves. From these general strictures must be excepted the villa and gardens of Doria, with the fine prospects of the village and bridge of Sestri, the Sunday resort of the Genoese.

The harbour of Genoa now appeared in view, with the grand amphitheatre of houses rising above it. The encomiums passed on this noble view have not been exaggerated. The King and Queen were just going out to take an airing. "Oh, sure a pair!" There was little of royalty visible in the countenance of either, although the high Savoy blood had been mingled with the richer stream of the Stuarts; not to talk profanely, they looked a homely old country couple taking an evening ride after dinner.

The first object that attracts notice is the Doria palace, which recalls to mind Genoa's most glorious patriot, Andrea Doria. What a noble display of

more, than Roman virtue was his, when, after rescuing his native city from the thraldom of Francis the First, and, with the aid of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, restoring the liberties of his country, he with a magnanimity equal to that of a Washington, descended to the rank of a citizen, when fortune tempted him with the dazzling prospect of a throne. The covert way, by which he made his escape from his dwelling to the garden, from the pursuit of the Fiesco conspirators, is still shown. Well did that ambitious noble merit his fate, in being drowned, when in the act of conspiring against the life of the greatest man that Genoa ever produced.

The three principal streets—one glittering range of polished marble,—the Durrazzo, the Babli, and Serra palaces, even still entitle the city to the name of Genoa "la superba." The new buildings of the theatre St. Agostino, and the hospital, are justly admired. But, thanks to the Austrians, who commenced the pillage, and the French who completed it, the famed bank of St. George is no more, which once formed so safe and economical a place

of deposit for the public money, by preventing its transfer abroad in commercial dealings.

It will not be necessary in this place to give more than a brief notice of this famed republic, as its more lengthened history is included in our notices of the republics of Pisa and Venice. It is sufficient here to state, that Genoa, at the head of the Ligurian republic of old, fell successively under the Roman, Greek, Lombard, and Frank power. The modern republic dates from the tenth century. After completely subverting the independence of Pisa, at the sea-fight of Meloria, Genoa maintained a series of wars with its formidable rival, Venice, with alternate success, although once a Doria, who was on the point of putting a bridle on the horses of St. Mark, by the capture of Chiozza, the fort commanding the Lagunes, was obliged to retire discomfited. On the restoration of its independence, by Andrea Doria, as we have already mentioned, Genoa ranked high as a naval power, and commercial state, till obliged, by Louis the Fourteenth, to reduce its navy to the number of six galleys.

During the war of the Spanish succession, Austria

obtained temporary possession of the city. It was again blockaded by this power during the wars of the French revolution, when it was defended by Massena. By the treaty of Campo Formio, the independence of Genoa was recognized, but this was only nominal, and the city was only finally rescued from French domination, in 1814, by Lord William Bentinck, who, in violation of the stipulations entered into, was obliged by the British ministry then in power, to surrender it, by the treaty of Vienna, to the Sardinian monarch.—Lord Castlereagh, a minister who entertained no love for republics, endeavoured by this compliment to Sardinia, to secure a free port in the Mediterranean for British vessels.

Though fallen from her former high estate, when to maintain her extensive commerce, Genoa possessed the flourishing colonies of Caffa and Tana, in the Crimea, and those of Pera and Galata, near Constantinople, still, since her port has been opened, her trade has been gradually increasing. The exports from Genoa consist chiefly of olive oil, a rich source of revenue to the nobles, of fruit, cheese, paper, and costly velvet.

The late king of Sardinia was very unpopular at Genoa, where he resided three or four months in the summer. I saw him at the theatre, where he was almost a nightly visitor. He was ushered in with the usual ceremonies; wax lights were borne before him, &c.; but a private box only was appropriated to the royal party. His consort, a very plain woman, was constantly at his side, and judiciously placed near her, to serve as a foil, a woman still plainer than herself. Charles Felix was the very beau-ideal of one born but to consume the fruits of the earth. His sole occupation in life seemed to consist in ogling the beauties of the theatre, and above all, in admiring the legs of the performers in the *ballet*. He had, however, the character of being good-natured and well meaning; which would incline us to impute to evil advisers his having continued, contrary to the promises given at the treaty of Vienna, by his predecessor, to suppress all the useful changes that had taken place during twenty years, and, in their stead, to support every old abuse; namely, an administration without control; an arbitrary system of justice; and the oppressive privileges of the ancient nobility, whilst the

country was loaded with taxes; and agriculture, commerce, and education, were utterly neglected.

The present King, Charles Albert, better known as the Prince Carignano, who joined the revolutionists of 1821, tempted by the hope of obtaining possession of the throne of united Italy, displayed the greatest want of spirit in abandoning his associates to the power of Austria: he probably soon saw that their disunion rendered their cause entirely hopeless; and we know that whilst many were clamorous for the adoption of the French constitution, others were as violently in favour of the Spanish. Charles Albert, though disliked by the Genoese, is not unpopular with his hereditary subjects of Piedmont. His government is despotic, but not unjust; strict economy is observed in the financial department of the state, and the people not being oppressed with heavy taxes, are tolerably prosperous and contented. In a word, Sardinia, from the advantages she possesses in her fine harbours, from the increase of her trade, and the improvement that has recently taken place in her navy, promises to become one of the wealthiest states in Italy.

CHAPTER V.

Journey from Genoa to Pisa—the early revival of the arts in that city—the advantages which the Italian Republics conferred upon Italy and Europe—a visit to Florence—the performance of an improvisatore on a country tour.

ONE of the most charming routes that can be taken, in sultry weather, runs along the sea coast from Genoa to Pisa. The fine road, now ascending on the borders of the Appenines, now opening on the cooling breezes of the sea, the noble bay of Spezia, the inexhaustible quarries of Carrara, and the celebrated little Republic of Lucca, are objects highly interesting to the traveller, and conduct him after a few days pleasant journeying, to the ancient city of Pisa, one of the first that obtained celebrity among the Italian Republics. Independently of

the interest created by the historical recollections attached to this once formidable rival of Genoa, it has further claims on our attention, as containing the earliest specimens of the revival of the art of painting in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The venerable Duomo of the eleventh century, the Baptistry and Leaning Tower of the Twelfth, but more particularly the Campo Santo, or burial ground, of the thirteenth, are places where the exiled Greek painters gave their first lessons in design to the earliest native artists: Cimabue, Giotto, Memmi, Andreà Pisano, and Orcagna. The fresco paintings of Giotto in the Campo Santo, descriptive of the history of Job, are still very much admired for their design, though deficient in colouring and drapery. The revivers of painting here had the further merit of having prepared the way for those great masters of the Florentine school—Massaccio—Allori—Ghirlandajo—Carlo Dolci—Angelo—and Leonardo da Vinci.

Before entering on the very brief histories, to be found in their appropriate places, of the principal Italian Republics, Pisa, Florence, Venice, and

Milan, a few general observations may be premised, to place in a true point of view the influence which the free institutions of these republics had upon Europe, and to show, more particularly, the degree of happiness which they conferred on their respective states.

With one class of historians, the unsettled nature of these republican governments, their internal dissensions, and mutual animosities, form a theme of unmeasured censure and condemnation; whilst with another class of very opposite opinions, the halo of glory formerly shed around these famous States, calls forth, not only their warmest admiration, but makes them sigh for their re-establishment. It will not be difficult to demonstrate the incorrectness of both these extreme views.

The Italian republics owed their origin partly to the alarm caused by the progress of the Saracen arms, when the different towns were left to protect themselves; and partly to the encouragement held out to the people by Otho the Great, to arm themselves against their native princes. As soon as the inhabitants of the principal towns

had secured themselves by the erection of walls and turrets, they turned their attention to the formation of their respective constitutions, the principal features of which were very similar. The people, at first, by means of their general assemblies, the grand depositories of power, and by the election of Consuls, from among themselves, in whom the executive authority was lodged, secured a complete controul over their liberties. But a variety of causes soon conspired to derange these primitive and democratic forms of government; the jealousy of the people towards the nobles, who began ere long to encroach on the popular rights, and the mutual animosities thus engendered; the invasions and usurpations of the German Emperors, causing the aristocracy and the people to espouse opposite sides; the great rivalry which commerce, foreign conquests, and renown in arms, gave rise to; and above all, the long and protracted struggles for power maintained between the Emperors and the Popes, the first at the head of the Ghibelline, the latter of the Guelph faction, were so many causes combined, which not only sowed

bitter feuds between rival states, but rendered each town in itself a prey to dissension.

The nobles, though for some time baffled, eventually succeeded in obtaining a paramount influence. Milan was among the first to receive a master, in the noble family of the Della Torre, which acquired power by attaching itself to the interests of the people; but the influence of this family was not of long duration, being superseded by that of the more powerful one of the Visconti, which long retained sovereignty in Milan. Venice, by establishing an hereditary nobility about the same period, became a pure aristocracy. Of the smaller states, different families took nearly absolute possession; the house of Este of Ferrara, the Della Scala of Verona, the Polenta of Ravenna, the Gonzaga of Mantua, and the Carrara of Padua. Florence, and Genoa, but particularly the latter, longest retained their democratic forms of government. But the glory of the Italian republics terminated, as Sismondi justly observes, in the sixteenth century. Florence fell under the authority of the Medici, and the rest of these states,

Venice and Genoa excepted, submitted to the Spanish or Austrian yoke.

The dissentions, and the unsettled nature of these republics, as we have said, are the chief grounds of objection brought against them by the admirers of absolute monarchy. But if we take a wider and more philosophical view of the subject, these evils, often very much exaggerated, were counterbalanced by glorious advantages, of which Italy and Europe have been equal partakers. In the first place, these civil feuds, when Germans and other foreigners did not interfere, were seldom attended with much bloodshed, the warriors of each party going out every summer, as if to a tournament, to settle by combat their mutual differences, and returning to their usual avocations after the termination of the contest. But even admitting that there was occasionally considerable loss of life—and in the contests between Pisa and Florence, the bloodshed was often great—still, how much more sanguinary were the wars of the rest of Europe? witness the deadly strife between France and England, which was seldom interrupted,—the

bloody feuds of the Roses in the latter country, and those of the factions of Burgundy, Orleans, and Armagnac in the former. Admitting, however, that the balance of happiness, or rather of unhappiness, in this respect, stood equal between Italy and the rest of Europe, ought not the preference to be awarded to those institutions under which the comforts, the elegancies, and the luxuries of life were diffused through the channels of a beneficent commerce, under which refinement of mind was fostered upon the revival of learning, and the civilization of mankind at large promoted by the successful cultivation of the arts and sciences, but above all by the high price here set upon independence? When the rest of Europe lay plunged in night and barbarism, Italy had her poets and her philosophers; whilst the population of the lands around her were the serfs and bondsmen of their imperious lords, Italy was a nation of banded freemen, cherishing the spark of a generous liberty, nearly extinct in all the world besides, and transmitting it in its purity, to kindle the flame which we now see burning steadily in some more fa-

voured spots, and ready to burst into a blaze in others.

Bidding adieu to Pisa, I hastened to visit Florence. Not far from this city, in a sweet little retired village, pleasantly situated on the declivity of a gentle hill, where content and smiling happiness, the fruits of rural industry, beamed in each rustic countenance, we halted for the evening. To the no small satisfaction of our party, we learnt that a celebrated improvisatore, who happened to be on a provincial tour, had been prevailed on to delight the joyous inhabitants, *for that night only*, by the display of his extraordinary talents. This exhibition having the charm of novelty for most of us, was thankfully received at fortune's hands.

We were all punctual, therefore, to the appointed hour, and carefully secured our seats in the small but neat theatre, which was so soon to be graced by the presence of the bard. After a considerable interval employed in impressive preparation, a practice common with great men, adopted probably in the hope of rendering their appearance more

imposing, the long looked-for hero presented himself. His air was rather prepossessing, and his person most scrupulously adorned to the nicest point of fashion. After having read over, in a slow and solemn manner, the rules to be observed in this poetic exhibition, he called for a subject worthy of his muse. The theme selected by one of the audience, Napoleon at Elba, was received with perfect composure, and with all the gravity of a parish clerk, was duly committed to paper; then slowly rising, and reading it over carefully, he proceeded to pace the boards with melancholy steps and slow, while, "his brow like to a tragic leaf," he ruminated over the delphic sheet which he held in his hand.

One moment, as if suddenly seized by the poetic flatus, he marched with rapid strides, in the next, slightly starting, he halted, as if his muse had met with some unusual obstacle; to clear away this impediment, he drew a perfumed handkerchief from his pocket, and by applying it soothingly to his nose, he seemed to succeed in propitiating her. Again he slackened his pace to take a pinch of

snuff, and lastly, applying his forefingers forcibly to his forehead, to support it under the throes of the forthcoming birth, he, in a most monotonous tone of voice, gave utterance to her inspirations, sawing the air all the while with his extended arm. His poetic effusions flowed pretty rapidly, and were honoured with due applause. On the conclusion of this first exhibition of his powers, he sat down, apparently rather exhausted, and afterwards retired for a short interval to recruit his strength.

The next performance consisted of the composition of a series of lines, a certain number of which terminated with given syllables. This task, which must have required considerable practice, was also completed to the general satisfaction. On the whole, our poet, though at no period of his *improvisation*, like some modern Corinna, affected to tears, (nor indeed was his audience,) seemed to understand his trade well. Far, however, from trembling under the inspirations of the god, like the Pythian priestess of old, our Magnus Apollo never once lost himself; nor do I believe that

any consideration, either human or divine, could have diverted him from his subject; to it he most tenaciously adhered; he gave all he bargained for, but not a tittle beyond.

CHAPTER VI.

The appearance of Florence—The recollections it calls up—The justice of the comparison made between it and Athens—The Gallery of Florence—The Venus di Medici—The Pitti Palace—The Venus of Canova—A very brief notice of the state of Literature in the Fifteenth Century, before it burst forth, in all its splendour, in the Sixteenth.

THE environs of the Tuscan metropolis are highly cultivated, being covered with different kinds of grain, but particularly wheat, repaying the labourer's toil three-fold. The whole face of the country is agreeably diversified by valleys and lofty hills, among which, the deep groves of Vallombrosa, whence Milton is supposed to have drawn some of his richest descriptions, far to the right spread their imbowering shades. A little

nearer Florence stands the celebrated Chartreuse, the seat of those religious austerities, which excite the pity of the many, the sympathy and admiration of the few. As the traveller advances nearer to the centre of this great amphitheatre of hills, the busy villages of the Tuscan commonwealth present themselves to view, in the midst of which the suburban villa of the Grand Duke forms a most conspicuous object.—Who on entering Florence,

> ——"The Etrurian Athens,
> Where modern luxury was of commerce born,
> And buried learning rose redeemed to a new morn,"—

does not feel an interest in the classic recollections of this enchanting city? What lover of the popular cause, but must feel proud of the long struggles she maintained, in asserting the rights of the many over the privileges of the few? What mind, in which there exists one particle of love of learning, or a taste for the refined and beautiful in art, but must feel the yearnings of affection towards that spot, where the one arose again with fresh vigour, and the other attained its highest perfection?

The striking resemblance that existed between Florence and Athens has often been observed:—the same ardent thirst for liberty; the same watchful jealousy for its maintenance; the same violent factions, by which both states were distracted; the same commercial wealth; the same love of arts; the same refinement of taste; the same witty and satirical turn of mind. If the one can boast her Pericles, the adorner of her city, the other can proudly produce her Lorenzo de Medici;—if the ancient city hung with raptures over the tragic page of her Æschylus, her Sophocles, her Euripides; the sublime Dante, the love-inspired Petrarch, the enchanting Boccaccio, were equally in the hearts and on the lips of the modern one;—did wit degenerate into licentiousness in Aristophanes, it was carried to equal excess in Aretino, Pulci and Berni;—was the one tyrannized over by Pisistratus, the tyrant Duke of Athens attempted to forge chains for the other;—had Athens her historians,—her Thucydides, her Xenophon; Florence also had her Guicciardini, her Machiavelli, and her Villani;—did Phidias, Praxi-

teles and Polygnotus embellish one city with their immortal works of art, the other was equally ornamented by Bandinelli, Brunelleschi, and Michael Angelo;—was Socrates put to death for surpassing mankind in knowledge, in like manner was Galileo imprisoned for asserting the true theory of the earth;—is Athens accused, in the unamiable part of the picture, with ingratitude to her Aristides, her Themistocles, her Cimon; Florence was no less unjust to her Dante, her patriot Pazzi, her Strozzi;—to complete the resemblance, was a tyrant, the general of Alexander, established over Athens, Florence also received a master in Alexander de Medici.

The gallery of Florence is, next to the Vatican, the widest field of study presented to the connoisseur. Without pretension to so high a title, it is yet impossible to refrain, like other uninitiated writers, from remarking on a few of the striking objects that here meet the eye.

For this splendid temple of the fine arts, we are indebted to the refined taste of the first Medici, the noblest gift which princely munificence has

ever conferred. Within its walls an uninterrupted history of painting may be read, from its first imperfect dawning in Tuscany, in the eleventh century, till it set, with all its brilliancy, in the rich tints of Venice. Numerous interesting remains are here also preserved of the sister arts, consisting of vases, and Etruscan ornaments, which date from a period even antecedent to the Roman history.

The palace itself, of which the gallery only forms a wing, was built by Arnolfo; in its spacious court some of the finest masterpieces in art are exposed to the open air, without injury, particularly the famous Perseus and Medusa of Cellini, which reflect infinite credit on the taste and care with which they are executed. Beside these are placed, as it were in competition, the Hercules and Cacus of Bandinelli, which would inflict a deep wound on the pride of the irritable and pugnacious Cellini, were he living; but posterity has forgotten the many calumnies of this versatile artist, and has done justice to the merits of his rival.

In the principal room, where a fine collection of the busts of gods and emperors is preserved, one cannot avoid being struck with Bandinelli's imitation of the "Laocoon." Of the several schools arranged in different chambers, the Venetian, which exhibits the glowing colours of Titian and Paul Veronese, bears the palm. There is an interesting collection of portraits of the different painters in another chamber; but few of them are good pictures. Perhaps as the result of a pardonable vanity, the artists, like fond mothers, were more solicitous about their offspring, than anxious to set off their own persons to advantage. With the exception of the caricatures of Mieris, there is but a small collection of the Dutch school.

But a visit to the noble hall of the "Niobe," would of itself repay the traveller for a journey to Florence; I had heard of statues, but never till then had I seen a connected story told in stone. In this splendid group, from the afflicted mother, who shelters her youngest infant under her robes, from the shafts of Apollo, through the various gradations of alarm and grief, depicted in the looks of her disconsolate

children, down to her prostrate son who has just expired, there is a pathetic connexion of narration, which requires little ingenuity to unravel; the whole is the closing scene of a deep tragedy; the moment here made immortal, that in which the emotion of the impassioned actors makes us feel that the tale has reached the pitch of woe over which the curtain must descend.—But, oh! the tribune! Elsewhere are beheld the scattered rays of genius; here they are collected into one focus, in the centre of which

> "Venus loves in stone,
> And fills the air around with beauty."

Notwithstanding the surpassing loveliness of this statue, it requires a peculiar light, to be seen to perfection, as if the Goddess half hid her charms till suitably wooed by the "God of Day." Her delicate limbs then literally shine under his oblique beams; and her eyes, half closed, half smiling, look into the beholder's for a return of love.

"The Wrestlers," "the dancing Fawn," "the Slave sharpening his knife to flay Marsyas," though works of the highest order, are all eclipsed by the statue "that enchants the world." In the magic circle

around the "Venus" are displayed many of the most beautiful works of the modern painters, as if they had assembled here to do homage to her loveliness: among the most conspicuous are the two Venuses of Titian; dangerous to look upon: a "Holy Family" by Raphael; another by Andrea del Sarto; and the "St. John in the Wilderness":—all works of the first character, and which in no wise suffer even in contrast with the noblest efforts of the ancients, a sufficient proof to the sceptic of the perfection of the modern school of painting.

The Palazzo Pitti, the residence of the Grand Duke, built by Ammannati, is too much in the prison style. From the gardens of Boboli there are some good prospects. The grand saloon is rich in pictures, the most celebrated of which is the well-known "Madonna della Seggiola" of Raphael, in the act of pressing the infant to her maternal breast. The "Fates" of Michael Angelo are full of his stern sublimity. In the "Prometheus" of Salvator Rosa, it is appalling to observe the Vulture gnawing the chained giant as he lies supine. Nor can I pass over in silence the "Venus" of Canova, that first of mo-

dern sculptors. The head of the goddess is elegantly inclined to one side, and the hand employed in drawing the robe to the bosom is finely imagined, and beautifully characteristic of female modesty. This modern Venus, however excellent, will not bear comparison with the ancient one. She has not those light and justly proportioned limbs, that elastic airiness of form, that spirituality of countenance, so conspicuous in the latter. However, if we look upon the one as the personification of a divinity, we must also admit the other to be that of a most beautiful mortal.

Of the churches, though much inferior to the Roman temples, there are a few well worthy of examination. With regard to the cathedral, I confess, I was not familiar enough with the appearance which white marble presents, and with which it is crusted, to admire it particularly on the first view; but I could well understand how Angelo was enraptured with the dome of Brunelleschi, the first ever constructed, and which afterwards served for the model of that of St. Peter's. There is nothing worthy of notice in the interior.—The Campanile

or belfry adjoining is a beautiful structure, well meriting the eulogium of Charles the Fifth, "that it deserved to be cased in gold!" Behind is the Baptistry, formerly a temple of Mars, which has retained much of the beauty of its pure and simple original, the Pantheon: the bronze doors are by Ghiberti, the alto relievos of which are so beautiful, that they were worthy, according to Angelo, to be the gates of Paradise.

Before quitting this nursery of letters and science, it may not perhaps be deemed irrelevant to take a cursory survey of them from their rise in the fourteenth century, to their rapid advancement subsequently, under that noble patron of letters, Cosmo de Medici, till they had almost reached their zenith, under the princely protection of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

The Troubadours of Provence, whom we have already mentioned as flourishing during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, emigrated during that period to the south of Italy, in consequence of the invitations and encouragement they received from the Sovereigns of Naples. The style of

poetry of these emigrants soon disseminated itself through their newly adopted country. Fantastic conceits, a kind of metaphysical love, and a certain conventional language, were scrupulously copied by the early Italian poets. Even the two great founders of the art, Dante and Petrarch, did not escape the contagion. When we join to this, the love for ancient learning and school divinity, that was conspicuous in these two great geniuses, we shall easily discover the source of many of their beauties and defects. Boccaccio, who has the merit of having formed Italian prose, constitutes the other distinguished member of this illustrious triumvirate, which not only composed a new language, but brought it to surprising perfection.

After these great originals, singularly enough, the rising literature retrograded for nearly a century and a half; during which time, not a single writer of great genius appeared, to pursue the glorious path that had been pointed out by the three great Florentines. The recent discovery of the lost classics, and the conquest of Constantinople by Mahomet, were the two events that

operated in checking, for a time, the first brilliant career of poetic invention. The first turned the attention of all minds to the study of these new found treasures; and the conquest of Mahomet drove the learned Greek exiles to Florence, where, under the noble patronage of the Medici, they still further increased the taste for learning.

Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio would have been great, with or without encouragement; but the laborious writers of the fifteenth century, like plants of a stunted growth, appeared to require all the fostering care of those princely patrons of letters, Pope Nicholas the Fifth, Philip Visconti of Milan, John Francis Gonzaga of Mantua, and Cosmo de Medici of Florence. From this careful culture arose those very learned men, with little original genius, Poggio, Laurentius Valla, John Pico della Mirandola, Merula the grammarian, Marsilio Ficino the translator of Plato, and his more celebrated pupil Politian.

This recurrence to the ancients, instead of being blameable, was highly praiseworthy. What could be a more natural proceeding than that the revivers

of learning should have recourse to those pure fountains, whence all arts and learning arose. We need not wonder, therefore, that learning, taking thus its right direction, and the imagination receiving its proper nourishment, genius should have arisen with such splendour during the sixteenth century; and that the bards of romance and chivalry, Boiardo, Berni, Ariosto, Tasso, and Pulci, their minds still further enriched with eastern imagery, should have appeared to the delight of mankind.

These great poets had too fertile a vein to be much injured by imitation; but, in the other fields of the imagination, the too close following of classic models exercised an injurious influence, which is but too perceptible in the Latin epics of Vida, Trissino, and Sannazarius, though in them elegance and harmony are carried to the highest pitch. The revivers of the drama showed more originality, but much less refinement: in tragedy, Trissino, Rucellai, and Alamanni, endeavoured to introduce the spirit of the Greek tragedies, without considering the difference of time, manners,

and people; in comedy, Bibbiena and Ariosto, though replete with dramatic vigour, are far too gross to deserve much commendation. But the cultivators of the sciences in the sixteenth century, are deserving of great praise, for emancipating themselves from the dogmas of Aristotle, which had been long followed, and substituting in their place, the new and more imaginative doctrines of Plato, thereby preparing the mind, once freed from its long-accustomed chains, to receive the true philosophy, founded on experiment and induction, which Bacon was so soon to point out, and Galileo to reduce to practice.

CHAPTER VII.

Dante—The Divina Comedia—New views of Rossetti upon the allegories of that poem—The question whether or not Beatrice is to be viewed as a personification of morality.

AFTER this very imperfect summary of the former flourishing state of Italian literature, of which Florence was the favourite seat, we cannot refrain from dwelling for a moment, on a few of the illustrious names that adorned this celebrated republic; and who triumphantly show, how much a state of very limited extent is capable of effecting under the fostering hand of Liberty.

Minds like those of Dante, Boccáccio, Machiavelli, and Galileo, were unquestionably cast in

Nature's finest mould: and these, the founders of ideal and of actual worlds, were all perhaps alike illustrious, although the sphere in which each revolved was different. The bard of Hell, and Purgatory, and Paradise, who was the first to arise like a sun, dispelling the mists of the dark ages, rivalling, and even extinguishing by his appearance, all preceding lights; he who, not content with painting earth, with all its sad and fateful history, soared on the wings of imagination, creating other worlds, may well challenge priority of attention.

Dante Alighieri, the father of modern poetry, was born at Florence in 1265. His family, of ancient and honourable descent, were all Guelphs. The poet's real name was Durante; but for shortness he was called Dante. Letters and the arts, particularly music and painting, early spread their fascinations over his youthful imagination; and under the excellent tuition of Brunetto Latini, his progress in learning was most surprising. Like so many other poets, whose passions are early developed, he was only nine years of age, when he first saw his beloved

Beatrice, a child of his own years; subsequently, frequent meetings turned the caprice of the boy into the passion of the man; and she, in whose honour he wrote his Divine Comedy, became his first and only love. As his mind was subject to extreme depression and melancholy, he found in the charms of music, and the intimacies he cultivated with the musician Caselli, at once an agreeable and necessary relaxation. Unlike Horace, he did not throw away his shield in battle, but distinguished himself as a brave man in his country's wars against Arezzo and Pisa.

His life had hitherto passed in tranquillity; but he received a shock in the loss of his incomparable Beatrice, at the age of twenty-five, from which he never perfectly recovered. To soothe, in some degree, his affliction, he married a certain lady named Gemma Donati, who proved a Job's comforter, indeed, a perfect Xantippe to the unfortunate Dante, who, from all accounts, was by no means constituted to act the part of a Socrates. These domestic troubles, it is to be presumed, were to a certain extent, forgotten in the cares of

public life, in which he engaged, not without reputation, having attained, when only in his thirty-third year, the honourable post of one of the Priors of the republic.

But here commenced "his fall," and "the loss of all his full-blown honours." The *Guelphs*, about that period, becoming jealous of each other, divided into two factions, the black and the white. The former, from the spirit of party, conspiring with Boniface the Eighth, called in Charles de Valois, by whose aid the latter were banished from Florence. Among these illustrious exiles none were more distinguished than Dante, and the father of Petrarch. In this unhappy occurrence, the poet conceived that he had been treated with great ingratitude by his country, and with still greater treachery by the Pope, before whom he was then trying to reconcile the contending parties. In great distress of mind, arising from these unfortunate occurrences, he wandered to different courts,—to Verona, where his reception by the Prince Scaligers was most honourable,—to Paris, where he obtained the theological crown for his

knowledge in divinity,—and lastly, to Ravenna. It was from this place, that in return for the great kindness manifested towards him by Prince Guido Novello da Polenta, he undertook an embassy to Venice. His mission proved unsuccessful, which so chagrined the disappointed bard, that he fell sick, and after lingering a short time, died at the age of sixty-five.

Of his works, the early canzone, though they contain many passages of true passion, are too affected. His *Dream*, or *Vita Nuova*, is full of grief for the loss of Beatrice, who, when he wrote it, appeared to have occupied both his sleeping and his waking thoughts. The only excellence of his *Banquet (Il Convivio)* is the full exposition it gives of the knowledge of the times. By his *Divina Comedia* alone his immortal fame is established. There has been much dispute to determine whence he derived the first idea of this famous work: this it is impossible at present to ascertain; but of this we may be certain, that for the materials of the poem and its general plan, he is indebted to his own creative imagination alone.

The *Inferno* opens nearly in the same manner as the *Tesoretto* of his master, Brunetto Latini, by the poet being bewildered in a forest, at the foot of a mountain: to rescue him from this dilemma, and indulge his eager longings after knowledge, the Mantuan bard appears, and conducts Dante, by the desire of Beatrice, to hell.—Here they pass through nine circles of torture, each circle being placed within the other, in the innermost and last of which, Satan is chained at the centre of the earth. The variety of suffering described under fire, rain, hail, ice, and snow, presents such appalling and sombre pictures, as the sublime imagination of the poet could alone render supportable to the reader.—He has a power of presenting the image so vividly and distinctly to the mind, that the object seems present to the eye. In this faculty of individuality, to borrow phrenological language, if we except Homer, he stands without a rival. He bears a further resemblance to the Greek poet in the number and force of his similes, mostly drawn from pastoral life.

Once out of that place of woe, over the gates of

which were written the memorable words so often quoted:

"Through me the path leads to the penal cells:
Through me the path to everlasting woe:
Through me the path to where the damned dwell:
Leave hope behind, all ye who enter here[1]."

The poet, overcome with sleep, reposes himself, and, after enjoying an agreeable vision, is conducted to purgatory, where the seven deadly sins are expiated. But such touching pictures of anticipated bliss are depicted in the countenances of the temporary sufferers, chaunting songs of praise in the presence of angels, who diffuse around the soothing feelings of hope, like soft airs from their radiant wings, that the sufferings they nevertheless endure are completely lost sight of. The contrast to the *Inferno* presented by the *Purgatorio* is truly refreshing.

Beatrice at last appears, and leads her lover to heaven, where, after beholding the different orders of the blessed, in the various planets, they ascend to the heaven of heavens, and view the happy spirits

[1] "Per me si va nella citta dolente:
Per me si va nell' eterno dolore:
Per me si va tra la perduta gente:
Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate."

enjoying the vision of the Deity, "like some gentle hill," to use the beautiful simile of the poet,

> "That stoops, as 'twere reflected, to behold
> Within the lucid mirror at its base,
> The multitude of herbs and beauteous flowers
> That ornament its crown and gentle slopes[1]."

The defects of this great poem are the often revolting nature of the images; the slender interest of the plot; the sameness, if not of the incidents, at least of the general tenour of the work, and the too frequent recurrence to the political animoslties of his country, the spirit of which the poet carries with him into heaven itself—that place of peace and forgetfulness of injuries. The beauties of the *Divina Comedia*, are, however, truly redeeming; amid the sublimity that universally pervades it,—the frequent lapses of the poet into tenderness, as in the pathetic tale which he introduces, of Francesca of Rimini,—the force of his comparisons,—the grandeur of his pictures,—the profundity which often makes him obscure,—

[1] "E, como clivo in acqua di suo imo,
Si specchia, quasi per vedersi adorno
Quanto é nell' erbe e ne' fioretti opimo."

the sustained stretch of fancy which never tires;—above all, the invention which every where appears, fill the mind with such emotions, that whatever dislike may be felt to the subject, or to the mode in which it has sometimes been treated, it is impossible not to feel the highest admiration for the transcendent powers that have triumphed over every difficulty, that conceived and successfully guided to its termination a work which stands alone among the monuments of human invention. Dante copied from no one; and it seems probable, that though many may imitate, no one will ever rival him in the walk of poetry which he has made peculiarly his own.

The interpretation of the allegories contained in the Divine Comedy, has long proved a subject of doubt and difficulty to the numerous commentators of Dante. Rossetti, in his very erudite and clever dissertation "ON THE ANTIPAPAL SPIRIT[1]," has given a new and ingenious explanation of the

[1] This work is every way worthy of its learned author, the gifted admirer of Dante, and possesses additional interest as the production of one, who, by his beautiful poem "IDDIO E L'UOMO," has proved himself entitled to a place among the very first of existing cultivators of Italian poetry.

meaning of the allegory that runs throughout the poem. It is the opinion of this very excellent critic that it was the intention of Dante, in his *Divina Comedia*, to read mankind a great moral lesson, in setting forth in his description of the guilty Babylon, the vices of the court of Rome of his time; to represent in the horrors of hell the punishments awaiting these crimes; and in the bliss of paradise, the return to more virtuous days. He finally regards Beatrice as the personification of morality or theology.

There are many cogent arguments adduced in support of this interpretation. The express authority of the poet where he says

> All ye whose minds are healthfully attuned,
> Admire, and prize the noble truths that lie
> Wrapt in the mystic veil of poesy [1];

the language of his contemporaries; his inexorable wrath towards the Guelph faction—for with Dante, "vengeance seemed not only a natural impulse, but a duty,"—his love for the opposite

[1] "O Voi ch' avete gli intelletti sani
Mirate la dottrina ch' s'asconde,
Sotto 'l velame degli versi strani."

party, or that of the Emperor, under whose authority he would have placed the whole earth; his habit of writing only after deep meditation,—all these circumstances are greatly in favour of Rossetti's doctrine.

This interpretation of Rossetti appears still more probable, if qualified with the more extensive views of Foscolo, who conceives that the great drama of human life, and not the abuses of the papacy alone —though perhaps more frequently alluded to— forms the real subject of the *Divina Comedia.*

The work of Dante, considered in this light, exhibits him not only as "the historian of the manners of his age, and the prophet of his country," but "as the painter of mankind in general," whilst "he calls into action all the faculties of our souls to reflect on all the vicissitudes of the world." But, with regard to Beatrice, if Petrarch is to be credited, who tells us that for several months after her death, "Dante had the feelings and appearance of a savage," although she may at times be brought upon the scene, wrapt in the mysterious veil of allegory, we have numerous reasons for believing

that she frequently appeared to the poet's vision, enshrined in that lovely form, under which she once subdued his ardent soul. It was then that the fancy of the poet poured itself into language in accordance with emotions aroused by the cherished memory of a first and passionate love. Of this we have abundant evidence in the following beautiful passage, where the most glorious spectacle in nature is employed to illustrate the impression conveyed by the first appearance of Beatrice in paradise, in all the majesty of beauty—

"I have beheld, ere now, at break of day,
The eastern clime all roseate, and the sky
Oppos'd, one deep and beautiful serene;
And the sun's face so shaded, and with mists
Attemper'd, at his rising, that the eye
Long while endur'd the sight: thus in a cloud
Of flowers, that from those hands angelic rose,
And down, within and outside of the car,
Fell showering, in white veil with olive wreath'd,
A virgin in my view appeared, beneath
Green mantle, rob'd in hue of living flame;
And o'er my spirit, that in former days
Within her presence had abode so long,
No shuddering terror crept. Mine eyes no more
Had knowledge of her."

He concludes in the language of emotion which must find an interpreter in every heart:

"Yet there moved from her
A hidden virtue, at whose touch awak'd,
The power of ancient love was strong within me[1]."

No sooner is the hidden chord touched, while gazing on the countenance of his Beatrice, than the memory of long bygone days revives, and he gives utterance to the following touching simile:—

"No sooner on my vision streaming, smote
The heavenly influence which years past, and e'en

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[1] "Io vidi già nel cominciár del giorno
La parte oriëntál tutta rosata,
E l'altro ciel di bel sereno adorno;
E la faccia del sol nascere ombrata.
Sì che, per temperanza di vapori,
L'occhio lo sostenéa lunga fiäta:
Così dentro una núvola di fiori
Che dalle mane angéliche saliva
E ricadéa in giù dentro e di fuori,
Sovra cándido vel, cinta d'oliva,
Donna m' apparve sotto verde manto,
Vestita di colór di fiamma viva.
E lo spirito mio, che già cotanto
Tempo era stato che alla sua presenza
Non era di stupór tremando affranto,
Senza degli occhi avér più conoscenza,
Per occulta virtù che da lei mosse,
D'antico amór sentì la gran potenza.
Tosto che nella vista mi percosse,"

In childhood thrill'd me, than towards Virgil I
Turn'd me to leftward, panting like a babe
That flies for refuge to his mother's breast,
If aught has terrified or worked him woe,
And loudly cried:"

Bursting forth unto the thrilling accents of passion, the poet exclaims—

"There is no dram of blood
That does not quiver in me; the old flame
Throws out clear tokens of reviving fire."

Under this all-subduing influence he finally subjoins—

"Nor Virgil—nor
All our prime mother lost, avail'd to save
My undew'd cheeks from blur of soiling tears[2]."

"L'alta virtù che già m'avéa trafitto
Prima ch' io fuor di puerizia fosse,
Vólsimi alla sinistra, col rispitto
Col quale il fantolín corre alla mamma,
Quando ha paüra, o quando egli è afflitto,
Per dicere a Virgilio: Men che dramma,
Di sangue m' è rimasa che non tremi:
Conosco i segni dell' antica fiamma."

[2] "Virgilio
Nè quantunque perdéo l'antica madre,
Valse alle guance nette di rugiada,
Che lagrimando non tornássero adre."

CHAPTER VIII.

Boccaccio—His minor poems—The Decameron—The merits of that work—An excuse for its faults—A comparison between Boccaccio and Chaucer—Machiavelli—The "IL PRINCIPE"—Is this composition to be considered as a satire on princes or not?—Was the mind of the writer corrupted?—His discourses on Livy—Galileo—The first of modern philosophers to question Nature by experiment—His imprisonment by the Inquisition—His discoveries—His domestic habits.

FROM the sublime poet who has just engaged our attention, we turn to the contemplation of a mind of a very different stamp, which, if it pursued a less aspiring flight, possessed at least greater variety and compass. If Dante aimed at reforming mankind by drawing in terrific colours the punishments that wait on unrepented crimes, far different appeared the object of the bard of the Hundred Tales of Love, who, by the most fascinating pictures which

art and imagination can form, allures us often, perhaps but too persuasively, into the flowery paths of pleasure.

Giovanni Boccaccio was born in 1313, at Paris, out of the bonds of wedlock; his mother was a native of France; his father was of a respectable family which had been long settled at Certaldo, a castle situated twenty miles from Florence. So early did the peculiar tendency of his genius display itself, that he composed fables, in verse, at the age of seven years. His father, at first, seeing with regret these early inclinations, and thinking poetry would never confer riches, was anxious that his son should embrace a more profitable calling. He, therefore, sent him on some mercantile missions to various parts of the country, to wean him from his favourite pursuits, but all to no purpose. The good-natured father, then convinced that his antipathy to business was insurmountable, abandoned all further opposition, and allowed him to follow the natural bent of his mind. Boccaccio was about the age of twenty when he first saw Maria, the natural daughter of the King of Naples, and for

whom he conceived a lasting attachment, which, appears to have been returned, we are sorry to add, at the sacrifice of virtue. She is the remarkable lady he has celebrated so much, under the name of *Fiammetta*. To her, and poetry, all his thoughts and time were dedicated; and Virgil, Ovid, Homer, and Dante were his favourite authors.

The fruits of these poetical studies were, *La Teseide*, and his other minor pieces; but, upon becoming acquainted with Petrarch, who generously offered to share his house and purse to extricate him from the embarrassments which his easy disposition, and the honourable expences incurred in advancing the rising interests of learning, entailed upon him, he abandoned all thoughts of the poetic laurel. His sagacity pointed out to him that the first place there was already forestalled, and by writing his *Decameron*, or One Hundred Tales of Love, he secured the same rank in a different walk.

Nothing could exceed the public enthusiasm on the first appearance of these beautiful tales. All the world became storytellers. The *Decameron*,

however, being too free and licentious, he was reproved with all the authority of a parent, by his friend Petrarch: at the same time, he was so alarmed by the prediction of an unknown monk, who declared that what he foretold would certainly come to pass, unless he reformed his morals, that the frightened author took the religious habit.

No one was more distinguished in that period of the revival of letters than Boccaccio, both for his promotion of learning, and for holding out encouragement to the Greek exiles; and by travel, or by letters to most parts of Europe, in searching for the lost Classics. His talents were not alone confined to the republic of letters; he fulfilled many honourable missions for his country. But though in the full enjoyment of his high reputation, he was so affected with grief at the death of his dear Petrarch, that neither travelling nor any other means could prevent his health, previously impaired, after lingering a short time, from sinking under the blow.

In disposition, he was easy and joyous, could bear no sort of trouble, unless connected with his favourite pursuits, was extremely learned, to which

his lectures on Dante bear ample testimony; and the only impediments to his happiness, were his occasional poverty and religious scruples, which appear to have been not without some foundation. His early works are now not much read. *La Teseide*, his first poem, is divided into twelve books, written in *ottava rima*, of which he is considered the inventor, and with all the pretensions of an epic poem. His second poem, *Il Filostrato*, is also drawn from heroic times; the *Ninfale Fiesolano*, composed in honour of his Maria, contains, under the veil of allegory, an adventure which happened in his time. Next follow the romances of *Il Filocopo* and *L'Amorosa Fiammetta*, both in prose, and the pastoral of *L'Ameto*.

But these would not have procured for him the lasting fame which he has secured to himself in his immortal *Decameron*, the beauties of which are apparent to every reader. It is considered the purest prose in the language; is overflowing with wit, and that natural archness so peculiar to the Italians in narrating a pleasant story, and presents so lively a picture of the manners of the times,

with so complete an insight into human nature, that it stands as a composition unrivalled. Among the most admired are the tragic tales of *Ghismonda and Guiscardo*, *L'Andreuola and Gabriotto*, *Tito and Gisippo*, that picture of true friendship. Among the witty, but immoral stories, the *Friar and Purgatory*,—the friar acting the part of Cupid,—the *King's Bedchamber*, and *The Gardener and the Convent*, are the best. But that which made so great an impression on Petrarch, is the last and beautifully tender tale of *Griselda*. It so pleased the lover of Laura that he got it by heart, and frequently repeated it to his friends, the narrator and his audience both dissolved in tears.

The faults of Boccaccio are comprised in two words—irreligion and licentiousness; words of very serious import, doubtless. His excuse, if any can be urged, must be sought in the depravity of the times, grounded on the impression that he had no fixed design to corrupt. The only aim of Boccaccio seems to have been to paint manners as he found them, and, as he himself has quaintly said, "to banish melancholy from among his female friends."

Few writers have had so many imitators as Boccaccio. Of these the most distinguished are his countrymen, the humorous Sacchetti and Bandello. Fontaine, too, has copied closely the style of the *Decameron*,—with this difference, however, that whilst the Italian appears to draw from the life, the French writer paints chiefly from the imagination. No wonder, then, that the tales of La Fontaine want that raciness, that air of truth and of reality, which keeps the attention of the reader constantly alive in the *giornate* of Boccaccio.

Perhaps no writer will so well bear a comparison with Boccaccio as the venerable Chaucer, the father of English poetry: possessing as he did the same originality of conception, he may truly be looked upon as a kindred spirit with the gifted author of the *Decameron*. As Boccaccio drew largely from the ancient *fabliaux* of the French, in like manner Chaucer has taken the plan of several of his Canterbury Tales from the *Decameron*, such as the Knight's Tale, Griselda, and some others. They both possessed a thorough knowledge of mankind, a fine sense of humour,

and a surprising power of describing character. But although there may be some general resemblance, there are obvious points of difference. Boccaccio, fraught with the learning of the ancients, and his imagination fed with the poetry of the Troubadours, drew the corrupt society he lived among: the friars, nuns, pious cheats, and other characters, who had lost all sense of moral restraint, through the demoralizing influence of the plague. The portraits of these he has painted with the liveliest wit and greatest truth to nature; but the pictures are so generally disfigured by such licentiousness in the attitudes and adjuncts, as argue that the writer himself had not escaped the moral contagion of his age. Chaucer, again, of strict morals himself, his mind stored with Italian literature, and the learning of the ancients, borrowed from translations, described the manners and men he was familiar with, with that raciness which smacks of a wilder but a fresher nature; and shows him one of a people, unlike the Italians, immoral more from want of culture, than depraved from the refinements of civilization. The first

excelled in composing a story with its endless pleasant incidents, enlivened with witty turns of thought, and humorous modes of expression. The chief power of the second lay in giving individual characters, which are drawn with such exquisite strokes of humour, and so naturally coloured, that they stand out from his pages like pictures after Nature. The former, by his powers of grouping and composition, may be considered as a great historic painter; the latter, by his family pieces, and his inimitable talent of seizing likenesses, as the first of Nature's portrait-painters. Boccaccio had a finer, more cultivated wit; Chaucer, with less refinement, a keener sense of humour.

If the English proudly look up to Chaucer as the creator of their poetry, though then unrefined, Boccaccio has perhaps the higher merit of having not only formed his country's prose, but of having brought it to a high degree of perfection.

From the great poets we have recently been contemplating, we now direct our attention to a writer, who, pursuing a less elevated path, followed at least one, that was all his own, and who

was the first of modern philosophers to turn his scrutinizing eye to that mysterious labyrinth, the human breast, and study man as a member of society. It would have been well, if his mind in pursuing this, to him as it proved, dangerous study, had always preserved its rectitude; he would not then have added to the honour of being deemed the first of modern political teachers, the stigma of having identified his name with that most tortuous of all policies, the Machiavellian.

Niccolò Machiavelli was born in 1469, at Florence, of a distinguished family, which was formerly noble. We know nothing of his infancy and youth, or in what manner his education was conducted. The Grand Chancellor of the Republic appears, however, to have soon discovered his abilities, having attached him to himself as his secretary. The statesman-like address of the young Machiavelli also pointed him out to his country as a useful servant, and he fulfilled many difficult missions to France, Germany, and Rome, to her entire satisfaction. His intimate connexion with the infamous Cæsar Borgia, in one of these embassies to the

Papal court, reflects little credit on the reputation of the historian. Mankind are, however, indebted to the opportunities this intimacy afforded him of studying character, for the composition of his famous treatise, entitled "IL PRINCIPE."

While in France and Germany, as nothing escaped his philosophical scrutiny, he drew up a very curious account of these countries, showing the paramount importance of the free towns in Germany, at that period; and singularly enough, in the former country, expostulating with the French, upon the terror they entertained of the warlike English, from the recollection of their former victories.

After many years spent in the service of his country, he was, upon the accession of the Medici to power, arrested, on suspicion of being privy to a conspiracy, and subjected to the torture. He bore his sufferings with great fortitude, and confessed nothing: probably, he had nothing to confess.

Disappointed of all future prospects of advancement, he retired to a small country house, where,

in complete solitude, he gave himself up to study and contemplation. Each morning, he tells us in his letters, covered with the dust of his little farm, he amused himself in arguing with his rustics, upon any subject, or upon nothing. But the evening was sacred to the profound study of his favourite ancient authors, guided by whose lights, he examined the principles of man, and those secret springs of government, which might be at once a benefit and a warning to posterity. If we admire in his *Il Principe*, the thorough knowledge displayed of the mind of an ambitious prince, we must condemn, at the same time, the depraved morality everywhere inculcated; namely, that the end justifies the means, and that a prince may perpetrate every crime in order to obtain success.

The *Il Principe*, though the most celebrated of all his works, is unjustly, in our opinion, preferred to his discourses upon Livy, where there are both better principles of government laid down, and much sounder reasonings. The examination in this historical treatise of the respective governments of Rome, Sparta, and Ve-

nice, where, after long pondering, the preference is given to the freer institutions of the Roman State, is consolatory to every lover of liberty. The excuse, too, advanced for the ingratitude which Athens is reproached with, towards her great men, is unanswerable, arising, as it did, from the natural jealousy she entertained of her liberty, without other sufficient checks for its protection. The *History of Florence*, except for its too great leaning to the Medici, is highly prized for its impartiality and style; the opening chapters, particularly, are admirable for the profound maxims they inculcate, and as being among the first modern attempts to prove that history is only philosophy teaching by example. His other writings consist of a clever life of that accomplished tyrant Castruccio Castracani; an invaluable treatise on the art of war; the satirical comedies of *Mandragola*, *Cassaria*, and the witty novel of *Belfogor*, which pays no very flattering compliments to married women.

The real design of the author in the *Il Principe* has long been a subject of dispute; and it is not yet decided whether it may or may not be regarded

as a satire upon princes. His justification of the murder of Remus by Romulus, and his occasionally advocating, in his other works, the same principles of injustice, would induce us to believe that he approved of them, and strengthens the opinion of his not having entirely escaped the corrupting influence of the lax political morality of the times. The best vindication of his character is to be found in the patriotic efforts which he made to rid his country of the dominion of foreigners, and in his ardent wish to behold her free and united under one leader. He has also left an admirable antidote to the *Il Principe* in his discourses on Livy, which are full of the noblest sentiments of liberty, and the profoundest political maxims.

What the great poets of Florence did for the ideal, the great philosopher that at present comes under review effected for the material world. If Bacon has been so much honoured for having demolished, by reasoning, the old philosophy, has not Galileo additional claims on our admiration, in not only, like his great contemporary, having pointed out the new philosophy, but in having further

proved it true, by questioning Nature by experiment?

Galileo Galilei was born at Pisa in 1564: his father was a nobleman distinguished for his musical writings. The young Galileo was educated for the medical profession; but the study of medicine not being congenial to his taste, he soon relinquished it for mathematics and philosophy. Such was his genius for science, that he read the works of Euclid and Archimedes without a master. His reputation in this department became so great, that he was elected to the vacant chair of mathematics at Pisa, by the Grand Duke.

The immortal invention of the telescope was preceded by some minor discoveries; shortly after which he published his proof of the Copernican theory of the earth's motion, and the stability of the sun; for which erroneous doctrines, he was summoned before the *enlightened* Inquisition, but was dismissed on making an ample recantation, with a warning not to assert in future the absurd theory that the earth moved, which they declared was both contrary to the evidence of the senses, and

the authority of Scripture. But the philosopher again relapsing into these heretical doctrines in his great work on the Ptolemean and Copernican systems, was condemned by those most upright judges, "second Daniels come to judgment," to an imprisonment of three years, and to recite the seven penitential psalms daily for the same period. Which of these punishments it was that induced him again to recant his errors, it is impossible to say: the sentence was, however, mitigated, and the penalty soon remitted altogether by the interference of his friends.

It has been conjectured, that it must have been from the tendency of his other writings, inimical to the temporal supremacy of the Pope, that the court of Rome bore him this ill will, for the same theory of the earth and the sun was entertained by other enlightened Catholics with impunity. Indeed, it was open to every Catholic to believe in this as his reason dictated; these physical questions never having been propounded as articles of faith by a general council. But probably the causes that had more influence than the one we have just

mentioned, in raising the storm of persecution against Galileo, are to be found in the jealousy with which little minds regard the great discoveries of genius, and that intolerance of new opinions which distinguished many of the clergy, at that time but little conversant with physical science.

The latter days of this great philosopher's life were devoted to an intense study of mechanics, particularly the laws of motion and percussion; he was the first to demonstrate that the spaces passed through by heavy bodies in falling, are as the squares of the times; but his discoveries in the heavens by means of his telescope, of the satellites of Jupiter, of the surface of the moon, of the phases of Venus, of the cause of the milky way, of many new stars hitherto unseen by the naked eye,—and his development of the true theory of the earth, are the chief titles of Galileo to the immortality he enjoys among men. In disposition he was amiable; he loved the country, where his moments of relaxation were spent either in the cultivation of his garden, or in familiar converse with his friends.

He was never married, but he had illegitimate children. Galileo has left a name only equalled by that of Newton, who, as if to console the world for the loss, was born on the day the great Tuscan philosopher expired.

CHAPTER IX.

Leghorn—A great resort for Merchants of different Nations—Freedom of Religious Worship—Departure in a Steam-boat for Rome—Recollections on going up the Tiber—The contrast between its present and its former state—Disembarking at midnight—Wandering through Rome—The Festival of Corpus Christi—The Procession—The different feelings of the Spectators—The utility of some of the Monastic Orders.

In visiting Leghorn, an inhabitant of Great Britain will be struck with the odd mixture of English manners and Italian customs that prevails. Whoever, indeed, is solely in quest of the fine arts, needs not turn out of his route to visit this Tuscan port; but he who studies men and manners will be greatly amused by observing the different nations that here congregate from the four quarters of the globe, to buy, to sell, and to overreach. Amidst

this motley congregation, the dark and avaricious Israelite forms a prominent object in the picture. The Jews, elsewhere barely tolerated, here form about a fourth of the entire population, with the full enjoyment of civil and religious freedom.

Inferior to them in number, though higher in respectability, are the inhabitants of the British isles, who seem more the masters of the soil than the Italians themselves; a free scope is given to their tastes; and even their domestic peculiarities have ample latitude for indulgence: London porter, ale, roast beef, tea, are commodities of life accessible to the lowest as well as to the highest of our countrymen here. In every street may be seen the comfortable abode of some English merchant; and the hearty, though by no means pious exclamation of a British tar, salutes the ear at the turn of every corner. It is a curious coincidence, that, in the English burial-ground, Smollett, who excelled in depicting the checquered life of the hardy sailors of our nation, should lay his bones, and have a monument erected to his memory in so appropriate a place. There is nothing remarkable in the

buildings, nor is there much architectural worth in the churches. The harbour is small, but convenient, and the public promenade enjoys a full and an agreeable prospect of Elba, Majorca, and Minorca. Besides a large Jewish synagogue there are two Armenian churches, which speak favourably for the toleration of the government.

The inducements held out of an easy conveyance to Rome in the steam-boat, and our anxiety to be present at the festival of Corpus Christi, prevailed on us to abandon our purposed route by land. After a few hours' sail, we coasted the famous isle of Elba.—One of the most short-sighted acts of the Holy Allies seems to have been the choice of this island for the prison of Napoleon; to suppose that the eagle would not fly back to his old eirie, as soon as the eye of the hunter was averted! If these sage despots had been prescient, by having left him on the throne of France, they would have preserved themselves from much of their present trouble.

The next day we entered the Tiber: the pages of Virgil and Livy, of course, recalled to our

memories the sanguinary battles of Æneas and Turnus, and how every inch of ground was contended for by the infant republic, and the surrounding petty states. Down this famous stream, sailed, in the proud days of the commonwealth, the Consuls, in their well-appointed galleys, to take the command of their fleets equipped for foreign conquest. But where are now the gorgeous fêtes celebrated on its bosom in the haughty and luxurious days of the empire? where are the votive temples raised along its banks? have inundations covered them?—"Vidimus flavum Tiberim."

Into how small a compass has this God of rivers dwindled! The venerable Tiber, we must needs suppose, was formerly more commodiously lodged; in its present very moderate breadth, it would require the warm imagination of a Cassius to conceive the troubled Tiber, "even in a raw and gusty day, chafing with his shores," or we must suppose Cæsar a wretched swimmer, "to cry for help," ere he had gained the point proposed. It is not only from Horace that we learn that several buildings were inundated by its overflow; in the middle

ages, it rose so high as to flood the Coliseum and contiguous buildings. With regard to its colour, I could not see the justice of the epithet, flavum; it is muddy enough, truly, but could hardly be called yellow. With ample allowance for the grand descriptions of Horace and Virgil, we must reconcile in some degree its present with its pristine state, by supposing that its channel has been narrowed both by the crumbling in of the circumjacent ruins, and the encroaching sand of the sea at its mouth. It has been choked up, indeed, so much at its entrance, that one of the late Popes was obliged to construct a banked canal, half a mile in length, as a means of communication with the sea.

Along these shores, once teeming with life and happiness, are now only to be seen a few poor cottages, droves of horses, and some wild buffalos ranging at large. Occasionally in the distance, some Roman peasants may be perceived, riding rapidly to and fro, after their cattle; the peaceful occupation of herdsmen having succeeded to the lawless pursuits of savage banditti; the dress, however, is unchanged; and the slung carabine, the slouched

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hat, and blue military coat, still bring to mind the wild and romantic groups of Salvator Rosa.

The shades of evening had now closed around us, and incapacitated us, as we approached the eternal city, from seeing any object distinctly; one only, by its massy grandeur rose through the gloom, at our side: it was the Church of St. Paul, or, to speak more correctly, the ruins to which, by an accidental conflagration, this ancient edifice had lately been reduced. On our arrival at the quay for disembarkment, we were informed that the usual hour was past for the admission of strangers; permission was, however, obtained to enter the city walls, on condition of leaving our luggage behind us.

It was ten o'clock, and at that late hour we were groping our way in ancient Rome, without clue or guide. Our situation, which had its charms, excited no small surprise in a polite Roman, who directed us to the place of our destination. We crossed a bridge, and amused ourselves with speculating on the possibility of this being the Ponte-Molle, or perchance the Ponte-Rotto. Under

similar feelings of curiosity, we cast an inquisitive glance into the miserable houses that lay in our way. No proud Roman was retiring to his humble couch after having voted for the honour of the commonwealth; but some half-dressed peasants, after the fatigues of a sultry day, were frying their cheap fish for supper. Passing forward, a huge round mass obstructed our view. "Here at least," we exclaimed, "is something of ancient Rome, which has escaped the wreck of ages!" The Pantheon stood before us. A little farther on, we encountered a numerous party going to the theatre, after having piously attended an illumination in honour of St. Francis; a strange transition from a scene of devotion to one of pleasure. Fatigued with wandering in this land unknown, without chart or compass, the reception we met with in a comfortable inn was extremely acceptable.

On the morrow, we found all Rome in busy preparation for some great event. It was the festival of Corpus Christi, one of those annual ceremonies which the church celebrates with unusual splendour, for the edification of her flock.

At ten o'clock every possible means of conveyance was in requisition, and all the world, native and stranger, orthodox and heterodox, might be seen hurrying to St. Peter's. As soon as the beautiful square is gained, each provides himself with a convenient situation. On the outside of the magnificent colonnade, the interior of which is covered with tapestry and rich carpets, the middle and lower classes are seated on low benches; the nobility and gentry are accommodated in the decorated apartments of the surrounding houses.

A solemn bell announces the commencement of the spectacle. Every eye is turned to the great eastern door of the church; the procession from thence is opened by the young boys of the different charities of Rome, advancing in regular order, singing the psalms. To them succeed, in humble garb, and dressed in still humbler looks, the different mendicant orders. These poor Fathers, with their shaven crowns, their simple garments, and lengthened cords girt around their loins, appear to have bid an eternal farewell to all earthly greatness; it is hardly possible to doubt their earnestly resigned

looks; or to imagine hypocrisy concealed under such vile attire: if "they show us the steep and thorny way to heaven," to all appearance, they do not "themselves the primrose path of dalliance tread." Then follow in their decorous files the variously costumed friars,—black, white, and grey; in the foremost ranks, dressed in sober black, appear the children of St. Austin, famous in former ages for being the ready confessors of poor and rich. Then the poor Franciscans, with their cords of penance round their waists, once so noted for the meagreness of their diet, and the austerity of their lives. Next, the learned Dominicans, in robes of spotless white, the founders of the Inquisition, it is true, but the no less celebrated preachers of the church. Close to them come their celebrated rivals, the accomplished Jesuits, the scientific teachers of princes, the classical preceptors of youth, once the masters of Paraguay, and the zealous missionaries of China and Japan. The dignitaries of the different churches succeed—the various bishops, attended by their crosier-bearers, of which body the Armenian prelates, with their venerable beards

sweeping down their breasts, formed the most distinguished ornament; and lastly the magnificent band of the Pope, preceding the array of the haughty Cardinals, among whom appear some fine looking men; for though age often debilitates their limbs, either the respectability of their origin, or their elevated station, impresses on their looks and manner a certain air of dignity. After a moment's pause, the cannon of St. Angelo is heard; its solemn peal announces the near approach of the Sovereign Pontiff, marshalled by the officers of his household. The venerable old man is borne aloft, in a splendid litter on the shoulders of his subjects, under a canopy of silk; his hands are joined, and his eyes fixed, in act of adoration of the Host, which is borne before him; his suite, consisting of many of the nobility of Rome, dressed in splendid uniforms, and mounted on richly caparisoned steeds close this gorgeous cavalcade.

It was curious to observe, while these scenes were passing before us, the different impressions which they left on the minds of the spectators. To the devout Catholic all was grand, solemn,

and sublime: imbued from his earliest infancy with deep reverence for the mysteries, and even ceremonies of his Church, he looks back to the earliest ages for their venerable origin; from the catacombs, where the primitive Christians practised their proscribed rites, he derives the example of these religious practices; his mind is full of the caves and deserts of Egypt, into which, by dreadful persecutions, his religious progenitors were driven; his thoughts revert to the public penances established for private offences among the first followers of Christ; the history of the Fathers, and the lives of the Saints, are fresh in his recollection; nay, the incredible legends, invented in a simple age, devoutly received in ignorant times, and hallowed by being viewed through the obscure light of the middle ages, fail not to add their ancient and venerable sanction to these imposing ceremonies. On the other hand, the opponent of the Roman Catholic faith, sees nothing in all that he beholds, but idle pomp, gross superstition, and empty mummery: he wots nothing either of their origin or history, and holds them the product of priestcraft and igno-

rant credulity; and then his antipathy is further strengthened by calling to mind the scandals propagated to the prejudice of the different orders, in the tales of Boccacio and La Fontaine; of their vices and consequent suppression, of the money paid for masses being, as the Duenna hath it, "transferred to their glasses." If the members of the religious orders were virtuous, as it is to be hoped a great majority of them were, they have suffered sorely in this world's repute. If some were vicious, and in the lapse of so many ages, according to the frailty of human nature, no doubt many have lived who were so, they have received no mercy, at least on this side of the grave.

Many of the most sincere Roman Catholics now begin to doubt, whether, in the present advanced stage of civilization, monastic orders are truly beneficial to society. At a remote period, when ignorance pervaded the whole of Europe, even the enemies of these institutions allow that they kept alive the slumbering embers of knowledge, by copying the classics and studying the dead languages, to say nothing of the zeal they displayed in the higher

objects of their mission, in spreading abroad the lights of the Gospel.

With regard to the immense utility of these orders in former times, I may here adduce the opinion of a celebrated Italian historian, who has said that their existence, during the middle ages, had become necessary to the continuance of the Christian faith, so corrupt was society then in all its branches. However this question is decided on its general merits, the utility of those orders, whose whole time is devoted to the education of youth cannot surely be disputed; and in this liberal age, it must needs be allowed that he who devotes his energies in making himself useful to society, may be permitted to dedicate his leisure moments to the worship of the Deity in that manner which in his eyes seems best.

CHAPTER X.

The Vatican—The frescos of Raphael and Angelo—The superiority of the Ancients in Statuary—Are the Moderns superior in Painting?—The Coliseum—A notice of the division of its compartments—The cruelty of the ancient Romans—Appearance of the Coliseum by Moonlight—Astonishing exhibitions it once presented—The causes of its decay.

The Vatican,—who has not heard of the name! Here the noblest remains of antiquity are placed in juxta-position, with the grandest efforts of the moderns: it is the very heaven of the fine arts; for nothing but that which is excellent is admitted into these sacred regions. Enough is here to feed the fancy of the most imaginative; to satisfy the taste of the most fastidious. In one noble range of saloons, the eye gazes with rapture on polished busts and statues, till it becomes dim with the glittering confusion: in another, after the curiosity is in some degree satisfied with the solemn

majesty, and simple beauty of the ancient chisel, it is attracted by the glowing tints of the modern pencil, and rests in admiration on the immortal frescos of Raphael, which here spread their hallowed rays. One can hardly be persuaded, after beholding such treasures, that aught else remains in store; but the inquisitive mind may still be gratified, and the antiquarian find ample food for his keenest appetite, in the Grecian, Etruscan, and Roman antiquities which the Pïuses have collected together at the cost of great time and labour, and which are here stored in the most precious cabinets. In the adjoining apartments, to the delight of the scholar, the noble library of countless pontiffs, unfolds its deeply interesting pages, full of the past history, and future destinies of man.

Frequent inspection, and long study, are necessary to appreciate properly the numberless interesting objects contained in the Vatican. That which generally leaves the most indelible impression on the mind, is the Sistine Chapel; the prophets and sybils which adorn its ceilings are from the pencil of Michael Angelo.

The student, after the contemplation of these sublime frescos will turn with satisfaction to the pleasing contrast, which the softer and more graceful productions of Raphael present. If a preference were to be given to any of these, which time has spared, the Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple, and the School of Athens, may probably lay claim to the highest favour. In the first, the Two Angels are wonderfully portrayed, as the messengers of wrath, chasing the robbers from the sacred precincts: such indignation is depicted in their countenances; such ardour in every limb, to wreak vengeance with their out-stretched swords on the appalled transgressors; such impetuosity of motion lives in their feet and bended bodies, that in an instant, the wrapt beholder imagines he will see them overtake and smite the fugitives.

The School of Athens, again, without perhaps exhibiting any one incident so fairly wrought out, must still be allowed to contain more of general excellence. What a classic mind must Raphael have possessed; what highly poetic feelings must have been his, that enabled him to embody such a his-

tory, as he has left us here, where the silent gazer seems to form one in the assembled throng of Grecian sages, each brought before him in the body, and presented in the likeness he bore on earth! Here he stands in communion with the profound and gentle Socrates; a partaker of the wrapt inspirations of Pythagoras, revolving his heaven-drawn theory of numbers; a sympathizer in the cynicism of Diogenes; an approver of the calm, but imaginative reasonings of Plato; and drinking in the astute philosophy of the all-knowing Aristotle, as he turns him now to this, now to that side of the living groups who appear engaged in anxious disputation, on some difficult point of their different systems; whilst he has before him the warlike, but effeminate Alcibiades, hanging in doubt between the wise counsels of his master and the blandishments of Aspasia, who stands by his side.

However fine these frescos are, and with the exception of his rival's, they are the first in the world, they all yield in power of fascination to the glorious Transfiguration; where Raphael, in the clear colouring, the graceful natural drawing of the fi-

gures, so peculiarly his own, and the composition of a threefold story, harmoniously combined into one great whole, seems to have united all his perfections without any one of his defects. The "Dying St. Jerome," of Domenichino, near it, is the only picture capable of standing a comparison with it.

After revelling in these glories of the Italian pencil, a youthful admirer of the arts might naturally suppose, that the cold proportions of marble, the monotonous creations of the chisel, must yield in the power of ministering delight to the rich colouring of the pencil, with all its helps of light and shade, and ever-varying expression; let such a novice in the arts, proceed to the Cabinet of the Ancients, and he will soon perceive his mistake,—let him cast his glance on the faultless symmetry in the face of the Belvidere Antinous, now named the Meleager, or if that do not convince him of his error, let him turn to the wonder-striking group of the Laocoon, and he will confess, in the agonized furrows of the struggling parent's face, the griping folds of the serpent, and the terrified looks of the children, that genius has, indeed, triumphed over that

untractable material—stone; or, if he have still any doubt, that besides emotions of pity and terror, marble cannot equally convey the softer feeling of grace and dignity, let him behold the matchless Apollo Belvidere[1]: what a beautiful personification of the God of Morning! There he stands in all the dignity of an offended divinity! the fatal shaft has slipped from his bow without an effort—the upper lip is curled with sublime contempt, and the eyes are slightly raised in noble disdain. Nothing can be finer than the profile, when viewed from a certain position; each feature bespeaks the calm proud victory of the God. How fruitless would be our endeavour to find a parallel to this in modern art!

Even in an humble walk, where competition might be deemed less presumptuous, and the prize easier of attainment, and within our reach, how inferior is any thing we can produce, to that which is seen in the Hall of Animals. There is a semblance of life in its groups, which is quite surprising. It is not so much in a want of power to catch likenesses, that our inferiority lies; (for in that we surpass

[1] See Winkelmann's beautiful description of these statues.

the ancients,) we want the fire, the divine energy, which breathes even through these lower works of art. What better proof can be required than the comparison of the modern and ancient horse in the Hall of the triumphal chariot. How tame and dull is the former, when yoked with the latter, before the same antique car: in the one, the eyes, the nostrils, the mouth, breathe fire under the impetuous rage for victory; the legs are darted forward as impatient of restraint; nay, the same eagerness pervades the whole form to the very tail. Whereas in the figure of the other, however faultless, there appears to our shame, a greater want of the spur than of the curb, the tail, instead of the wild flowing sweep of that of its rival, has more of the air of an appendage, than the look of an integral part of the animal.

Undoubted as is their superiority in statuary, many sticklers for the ancients maintain, that we have little, if any, advantage to boast of in the art of painting. It is argued, and with much strength of reasoning, that to judge from the praises bestowed upon the ancient pictures, by Pliny and the Greek writers, they must have had all those quali-

ties, the exclusive possession of which we are often inclined to arrogate to ourselves. Unfortunately, there have been no fair specimens preserved to decide the question; but if we are to give credit to the descriptions given of some of them, their merit must have been of a higher order than is generally imagined. It has even been argued by Mr. Pope, from the description which Homer gives of the shield of Achilles, that the contemporary painters must have understood light and shade, foreshortening, and aeriel perspective; as the ancient poet must either have drawn the knowledge he displays of these branches of the pictorial art from the paintings he had seen, or derived it from his own imagination. Whichever of these views be received as the more probable, it must at all events be allowed, that the early Grecian artists were endowed with the natural powers, which are in harmony with the laws of perspective; and there is every likelihood that they had discovered these by the eye, and applied them in practice, though they might not have reduced them to scientific principles. We are certainly informed that Apelles was the inventor of a

varnish which rendered his colours extremely durable, and beautifully transparent. Perhaps the best conclusion that can be come to, considering the very imperfect grounds we possess for arriving at any, is, that the same superiority of design, and the same unrivalled powers of calm and dignified expression which we admire in their statues were exhibited in their paintings. These we may consequently infer, in the qualities of simplicity and severe grandeur, to have surpassed all that modern art has yet achieved. In versatility and variety of expression however, and in the management of light and shade, we are, probably, safe in concluding that the artists of ancient times had never attained the excellence which has been reached by those of the more modern schools[1].

Let us leave for the present, these beautiful monuments of the genius of a Phidias, a Praxiteles, and their successors, and repose the eye, dazzled with the glare of polished marble, and the thou-

[1] See Turnbull's very instructive History of the Rise and Decline of Ancient Painting, and his ingenious comparison between Ancient and Modern Artists.

sand glittering objects which adorn this sumptuous building, on softer scenes,—on the green ruin, and on the grey and broken arch. In the halls which we had just quitted, all traces of the ravages of time were effaced with the nicest art. Of the Coliseum, which now spreads its gigantic walls before us, little more than the noble enclosure has escaped the defacing hand of time, or the destruction which barbarous Goths, and still more barbarous Roman princes have perpetrated at different times; elsewhere ruins are scattered singly, like the first leaves of Autumn,—a broken pillar, an imperfect cornice, an arch without its pediment, a solitary block of stone with an inscription is seen, but in the Coliseum, ruins are heaped on ruins, a whole forest here lies felled, as it were, at once.

Its exterior is, in general, so perfect, that the mind is naturally led to expect but little internal dilapidation; but upon entering its circle the most admired disorder is found to prevail: benches, arches, galleries, are piled on each other in the greatest confusion; yet upon the whole it is matter

of astonishment that more has not been destroyed, when we consider that the Roman princes drew from it as from a quarry, and that Paul the Third dismantled it, as well as other ancient edifices, to raise the private dwellings of his nephews. These Vandal depredations were fortunately stopped by the enlightened Lambertini, who made the ruin sacred by the erection of a cross, in honour of the martyrs whose blood had been shed within its precincts.

It was towards the close of an Italian evening, that I first beheld the Coliseum. My mind was unprepared for the contemplation of such vastness. Before me, lay the Forum, and the once proud Senate of the mistress of the earth; beside me, a little farther removed, the ruins of the beautiful Forum of Trajan, a melancholy contrast to its former splendour; for a few imperfect columns are all that now remain of the pile which, with its noble Library, its sumptuous Hall of Justice, and its glittering banquet-room, was styled one of the wonders of the world. All the rest is buried in earth and silence. Trajan's Column, with its beautiful history of that great prince, is still perfect, but it

stands alone amid the desolation that surrounds it. But all these monuments of ancient Roman greatness, however grand, are lost sight of when the wonderful Amphitheatre of Vespasian fixes the eye, and absorbs the mind. The sun had just sunk beneath the glowing horizon, and twilight had already cast its softening influence over this, the vastest relic of imperial grandeur, when I first beheld it. How forcibly the mind is struck, on contemplating this gigantic mass of ruins, with the fleetingness of man's creations. "As long as stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand; when falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall, and when Rome falls, the world."—Thus exclaimed our Saxon ancestors, according to the venerable Bede, in ages long since past. The Coliseum is in ruins, and much of the glory of Rome has passed away; yet the world remains, and the prospects of mankind are brightening still as time runs on: the floor of the amphitheatre is no longer slippery with human blood; its walls no longer resound with the shouts of a cruel multitude; and the symbol of the Christian faith, the emblem of peace and mercy, hallows the precincts

ofice dedicated to murder. But let us, under the influence of other feelings, contemplate all that war, flood, fire, time, and the Barbarians have left us of the Coliseum, and speculate upon the various purposes to which its different compartments were appropriated. Crossing the arena, and ascending to the most elevated part, I reached the topmost gallery, where the poorest classes of Roman citizens congregated to witness the revolting exhibitions which took place within its walls, and where they once awaited, with savage eagerness, the expected victims. The wealthier classes were ranged beneath them, according to their rank. Still lower were placed the senators in their robes, their superior refinement not deterring them from attending these human sacrifices; and on the same level was the seat appropriated to the emperor, who was drawn in his triumphal chariot from his Esquiline palace under a covered way to the spot. Here, surrounded by his fawning satellites, he witnessed, in public, scenes, second only in enormity to those in which, in private, he sometimes took so principal a part. From yonder points, upon the

imperial signal being given, infuriated animals were seen rushing from their dens, and springing upon the miserable victims exposed in the centre of the arena. Fancy almost hears the cry of delight that burst at that moment from the crowd above; or, in the stillness round, imagines the hush that pervaded the assembly in the instant of expectation. Here, too, were the combats of the gladiators fought; here was the victor hailed with acclamations, and here the last sigh of the vanquished was drowned by the yell of the heartless multitude. The simple ancestors of these degenerate Romans would have turned with loathing from the contemplation of all the cruelties perpetrated here: the blood of the meanest among the hardy founders of the Roman greatness was never shed, save in the sacred cause of their country. But the days of the Dentati and of the Camilli were long past. Asiatic wealth, and its attendant luxury, had introduced corruption into the life-blood of the state; and the Romans of the empire, sunk in sloth, their hearts seared against every virtuous emotion, sought an escape from

vacuity of thought and utter idleness, in the revolting and sanguinary exhibitions of the amphitheatre: here their debasement was completed; here they became inured to the sight of blood, and at length, they felt no human touch of pity.

Musing in this manner, and lost in the recollections of former ages, I found myself overtaken by the darkness ere I was well aware of its advance, so that I had carefully to pick my steps over the broken benches, and encumbering ruins; and had hardly extricated myself from the long vaulted galleries I had been exploring, before the shades of night had completely enveloped me. Gaining the exterior of the building as quickly as I could, I seated myself on the turf of an elevated plot of ground, resolved to await the rising moon.

Before me and behind me, in dim and threatening perspective, lay this noblest of ruins; not a murmur was to be heard, except at intervals the hooting of the owl, and the shrill scream of the bat, from the neighbouring Palatine. Lost, for I know not how long, in a pleasing though melancholy reverie, I was all at once aroused by what I fancied to be

the sound of human footsteps, at but little distance from me. This noise had a very quick effect in dispelling my musings: I had read much, and heard more, of Italian banditti. The place where I was, I instantly bethought me, was one not unlikely to be selected by a member of this fraternity. I listened eagerly in the direction of the sound, concealing myself as well as I could in the long grass, the better to observe the object of my apprehensions, whom I now descried walking to and fro, under the shade of the Coliseum wall. As my solitary gentleman showed no intention of quitting his beat, I had nothing for it at length but to take heart of grace, and approach him cautiously. On coming sufficiently near, I was courteously saluted with a *buona notte*, and my bandit appeared before me, in the uniform of the Papal States. The sentinel stationed over the Coliseum was the innocent cause of all my apprehension. The honest fellow laughed heartily, upon my mentioning the desperate character for which I had mistaken him; he assured me jocularly that my life was very safe in his keeping, at the same time

that he stretched out his hand, as if to signify that the only attempt he should make, was upon my purse. A trifling gratuity secured me permission to re-enter the Coliseum; and again, within its silent precincts, I felt myself recompensed a thousand fold for my patience in waiting and temporary alarm, by the contemplation of its vastness sleeping in the peaceful moonlight. It is altogether impossible to convey in words any adequate idea of the beautiful scene I now beheld. Nothing I had ever read or heard of the magnificence of the Coliseum, as it lay before me, now appeared exaggerated; all, on the contrary, was remembered as tame and uninspired. Never can I forget the delight with which I watched, heedless of the flight of hours, the first faint slanting rays of the silver light, striking forth from the gloom in noiseless succession and in chastened beauty, each ruined point and toppling mass upon which they fell, and the queen of night, as she rose higher and higher in the heavens, shedding new splendour every instant upon the mouldering pile, until, having reached her highest noon, the wondrous whole, like

some magician's mighty hall, was laid bare, as it were, by enchantment. When viewing the Coliseum by moonlight, the eye at first dwells with unsated gaze on the individual parts, as the light, penetrating by each broken arch and crevice, falls upon them; but when the moon has overleaped the highest parapet, the several parts are merged in larger and larger, and more unbroken masses, until, at length, the whole of the mighty circle is lighted up in its venerable and impressive grandeur.

Of the local history of this structure, the interesting facts that have reached us are not numerous. It is supposed to have consisted of four regular stories, and of a fifth constructed of wood, for the accommodation of the rabble; Vespasian employed 12,000 Jewish prisoners in its erection, who built it in one year; there was space for the accommodation of 10,000 spectators seated; 5000 wild beasts were shown here in one day by Titus, and Probus exhibited, on another occasion 40,000 ostriches, boars, deer, and ibexes, amidst a forest which had been transplanted into the amphitheatre for the purpose; but the most surprising exhibition

must have been that of the elephant dancing upon the tight rope, which was, doubtless, a most graceful performance. It was closed in the time of Honorius, chiefly through the intrepidity of a Grecian monk, who rushed into the arena in the hope of separating the combatants;—he was slain, but his noble sacrifice of himself was not without its effect. The upper part was afterwards appropriated to the shops of artisans, and at a later period sacred dramas were performed in the arena. Since its consecration by Benedict XIV. it has been better secured by the erection of buttresses by Pius VII. No one can look on such a ruin without emotion; time, and the recollection of the scenes of which it was the theatre, have consecrated it in the eyes of the philosophic historian; while to the Christian it is hallowed as the spot on which the blood of the early martyrs was shed.

CHAPTER XI.

The political condition of the Roman State—Not so bad as it has been described—Some Manufactures—Great room for improvement in its Judicial and Legislative Institutions—Remarks on the state of the Catholic religion in Rome.

THE morals of no city, the manners of no court, have been so severely criticised as those of Rome. If credit is to be given to the extravagant picture drawn of it by some writers, Petrarch's appellation of "Babilonia rea" would be equally applicable to it, at the present day. "The clergy," according to the prejudiced representations of these writers, "are only anxious to amass wealth; the conclave presents a scene of the grossest intrigues; the

people are sunk in the vilest superstition, a state which is in every way fostered by an interested priesthood; the lower orders are ignorant and immoral; murder is scarcely considered a crime, the criminal being often allowed to escape with impunity; justice is a nullity, or a mockery; nothing exists like equal and impartial administration of the law; imprisonment is at the arbitrary will of the secretary of state, or of the Cardinals in the provinces; the poorer classes are without industry, the higher sunk in sloth and sensuality; the hierarchy is vain and ostentatious, without true piety or morality," &c.—If such a picture were a faithful representation, as it is believed to be by many, well might the Jew exclaim in Boccacio, that the continued existence of a church amidst such corruption was a standing miracle, sufficient to convince him of its divine origin; well might the Roman priests, like the augurs of old, laugh in each other's faces, when meeting in the street. But for the credit of religion, in the abstract, such a picture is grossly, if not intentionally, exaggerated.

To arrive at correcter notions, and remove such

errors from our minds, should we entertain them, we cannot follow a better guide than Count Tournon, in his very able statistical account of the Roman States. According to this impartial writer, whose means of information were ample, neither the pursuits of agriculture nor manufactures are so utterly neglected as has been supposed. From him we learn that there are 590,000 rubii, or 2,360,000 acres, *capable of production* in the province of Rome, that even, in the Maremma, large tracts, such as those of San Lorenzo and Civita Vecchia, are under partial cultivation; and that the Pontine marshes, (of which Pius VI. drained 40,000 acres,) are, in general, beyond the reach of improvement; at least, without an entire change of system. The reasons, according to the same excellent writer, why agriculture is not more flourishing, are, that the farms are too extensive, and in too few hands, for the amount of capital possessed by the farmers.

With regard to manufactures, so far from being extinct, the reader will probably be surprised to learn that in 1813, there were six hundred and

eighty-two factories of cloth, leather, silk, paper, iron, earthenware, &c. in the Roman States. In the matter of public instruction also, there are primary schools every where established, so that, none need be without the acquirements of reading, writing, and arithmetic. So far things are on a respectable footing: but it is impossible to speak so favourably of the civil government of the Roman States, this being extremely arbitrary in its nature, and depending entirely on the discretion of the Pope, and his counsellors. This may be tolerable, it is true, if mildly exercised; but a similar excuse cannot be offered in vindication of the judicial system: the Cardinals have unlimited jurisdiction in their respective governments, and are said to be often ignorant of law. Still the evils that necessarily arise from this state of affairs, and that would otherwise be insupportable, are not without a counterpoise: the lawyers, who perform the judicial functions of the Cardinals, are generally learned and impartial. The arbitrary power of the Cardinal-governor is also mitigated by the respective communes having the privilege of electing a gon-

faloniere, and six elders, chosen from their own body, for the regulation of the taxes.

But, notwithstanding, these checks to mal-administration, it is lamentable to contemplate the uncertainty of the law. In the Papal States juries are unknown; neither is there here any confronting of witnesses; the unhappy individual, accused of any crime or offence, is also exposed to an indefinite imprisonment previous to trial; in civil cases great expense must be incurred, and the dilatoriness of the proceedings is universally complained of. These circumstances, all being matters of fact, are susceptible of demonstration; but who shall decide on the question of the morality of the people of Rome? Simonde, whose general accuracy and fairness have not been questioned, has attempted to apply a kind of moral thermometer to the citizens of Rome, Zero being the point of absolute morality. The Cardinals, prelates, and clergy at large, are estimated at the temperate point, being all tolerably correct in their lives and deportment; the papal court stands somewhat under them, being strictly decorous; the shop-keepers, or middle classes, are

superior to the court, in the command of their passions, and therefore still lower on the scale; artists' wives are almost at the freezing point; artists themselves, on the contrary, are to be found above summer heat; professional men and their wives are in the converse position; whilst the whole of the lower classes, and one-fifth of those who move in the highest circles, are at the boiling point of vice. Whether this scale be properly graduated or not, I have no means of judging. The estimate it gives, however, does not appear very discreditable to the Romans, the state of things indicated being probably that which obtains in more than one of the great European capitals. The worst feature in the result is undoubtedly the depraved state of the poorer classes, depending, as this must, on a vicious system of laws and government; for the poorer Romans are represented, and I believe truly, as naturally humane, and very susceptible of moral impressions.

The low tone of morality among the labouring classes, however, does not give such scandal to strangers, as the loose morals of married people in

the higher ranks. The system of cicisbeism, which still prevails, although to a less extent than formerly, strikes at the very root of civil society,—

> ———" Blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
> Calls virtue hypocrite; takes off the rose
> From the fair forehead of an innocent love;
> And sweet religion makes a rhapsody of words."

If ever arbitrary interference with domestic relations were justifiable, surely this were a case requiring it.

But the true cure of the evil mentioned ought to flow, and certainly would flow, from a change in the constitution of the state. Some form of representative government should be introduced; a complete alteration should take place in the penal code; the administration of justice ought to be made open, and the civil should be separated from the ecclesiastical courts. To crown all, a considerable reform should be adopted in the practices of the Catholic religion, as it is observed at Rome; some of the festivals, at present too numerous, should be abolished; the reason should be

more frequently addressed in religious discourses; superstition should be discouraged among the poorer classes; all extravagant respect for images should be discountenanced; and the passions, often treacherous guides in morality, much less frequently and forcibly appealed to, whilst all allusion to apocryphal accounts of miracles, should be carefully abstained from.

In making these observations, it is far from the writer's intention, to throw out insinuations against the Roman court or clergy. Their intentions, on the contrary, he believes to be good; they imagine, doubtless, that an appeal to the senses, is the best kindler of devotion; and that an absolute government is most favourable to the interests of religion. Entertaining the highest respect for these opinions of the many sincere and pious men, who adorn the Church of Rome, the writer claims credit in turn for sincerity in dissenting from these views, which he thinks are erroneous. A member of the Roman Catholic Church himself, he can never imagine that the form of worship he follows in preference to any other, can suffer by being divested of some

accidental imperfections; that, thus divested, it needs to fear the light of reason, or that its spirit or practice is incompatible with free institutions.

CHAPTER XII.

Naples—The impressions it leaves on the mind of the traveller—The superstition of the people—An old woman at her devotions—The manners of the Neapolitan women—The supper of the lower orders—The Lazzaroni philosophers—The Public Museum—Hospital for the illustrious dead—Ascent of Vesuvius—Accident on the Crater—The bay of Naples at sunrise, from the summit of the mountain.

THE Sabbath dawned upon me in Naples; but not with the rising sun came the sober stillness, or decent sense of calm reflection, which distinguishes the day in Great Britain; the same bustle prevailed, the same noisy vociferation was heard on every side, as if no six days of toil had passed over the heads of the inhabitants here; no respite from their usual labours seemed to be expected, least of all, did their tongues repose. My rest was broken by such an early clatter in the street, that I thought

some murder had been done, or execution at least was about to take place; but I was undeceived upon going to the window, when I perceived that the people were merely vending their provisions with curses, "not deep, but loud." Whoever has enjoyed the happiness of being present at a contested election, or better still, whoever has had the good fortune to be within hearing of the interminable din raised by Irish pig-drivers when cheapening their harmonious stock at the end of a fair, may have a notion of the endless shouting of which Naples is the theatre. Each one bawls and gesticulates with all his might, apparently indifferent or impatient of the replies of his roaring companion: add to this the jingling of innumerable small bells, with which the horses are all adorned, and we may suppose Pandemonium, where Satan is so sublimely described by Milton, addressing his fallen companions, to have contained a discreet assembly in comparison.

On a stranger, the appearance of the inhabitants of Naples does not make a pleasing impression. It is hard to decide, whether filth, poverty,

or sallowness of feature stands out the boldest in the national portrait.

The public buildings, though very extensive, do not show much architectural taste; and the churches are more celebrated for their riches than any thing else. In visiting one of them, I was much struck with the great apparent earnestness of the people in their devotions. Their superstition, certainly far outstrips that of their more northern countrymen. I felt some surprise during service, in seeing from thirty to forty Lazzaroni enter with very little dress on except a shirt and small-clothes. This dishabille, and the dark countenances of the wearers, gave them a very formidable appearance, and they looked, at their entrance, as if they came more for the purpose of raising a disturbance than with the intention of joining in the devotions. But I was soon undeceived, for nothing could exceed their fervour in striking their breasts, and prostrating themselves on the ground.

The women, pious in every clime, are here peculiarly so; I was a good deal amused, (if I may be forgiven for saying so,) in watching the devo-

tions of an old woman before the picture, probably, of her patron saint. So far as I could collect from her manner, she appeared to be presenting some petition to her protector: having concluded her suit, which was evidently urged with great warmth, she became motionless and attentive, as if waiting for an answer; whether it was, that her request was unreasonable in itself, or that she had not a sufficient fund of merit to admit of its being drawn upon so largely at once, I know not; but she appeared far from pleased with the nature of the communication received. She then renewed her applications, and whether she had abated in her demands, or a sort of compromise had been entered into, I judged from the complacent smile that was playing on her countenance, that she had now obtained a more satisfactory reply, for after having returned her warmest thanks, she left the church evidently well satisfied with herself and her protector.

Surely such superstition is not a necessary ingredient in the Roman Catholic religion, and such a scene as I have described, instead of being useful, must needs be detrimental to its best interests.

In Naples itself, the royal palace, and a few of the churches, are objects of some interest. But it is the scenery around the city that makes this former abode of Parthenope truly enchanting. Such a balmy air! such sea views! such classic scenery! such enjoyment of life! The gardens and the public promenade, from which a panoramic view of the incomparable bay is enjoyed, surpass every thing of the kind in Europe.

The specimens presented by these public gardens and promenades, will not certainly lead the stranger to form a very high estimate of the personal attractions of the Neapolitan women, let him be never so little fastidious in this particular. The females are, in general, not only plain; to me they appeared even ugly. But a graver consideration, (though this surmise would, perhaps, sound less offensively in an Italian female ear,) is the apparent scarcity of female virtue; certainly it must require a very great share of charity, to conceive that this quality is rife at Naples.

> "When Paphos fell by time—accursed time,
> The queen, who conquers all, must yield to thee;

The pleasures fled, but sought as warm a clime,
And Venus constant to her native sea,
To nought else constant, hither deigned to flee,
And fix'd her shrine within these walls of white:
Though not to one dome circumscribeth she,
Her worship, but devoted to her rite,
A thousand altars rise for ever blazing bright."

Thus sings our late immortal bard with Cadiz in his eye. It would be rashness to dispute such authority for the voyages of Venus; I would only beg to suggest that, while on her sea route, she must have sojourned at Naples for a short time, this port lying in the way, and, to lessen her retinue, left behind some of her handmaids, neither the most handsome nor the most virtuous of her train.

It is a very curious spectacle, to see the lower orders eating their supper in the open air: long tables are laid out in various quarters, on which, meat or fish, &c. may be bought ready dressed, so that the evening meal is generally eaten under the vault of heaven. Those who can afford it, eat meat, others, less opulent, have fried fish, at a very mode-

rate rate, whilst the poorest of all, the Lazzaroni, obtain an ample supply of maccaroni, for about three-halfpence sterling.

This remarkable order in Neapolitan society appears to be the only remnant now existing, that inherit the spirit of some of the ancient philosophers. The souls of Diogenes and Democritus must have transmigrated into the bodies of the Lazzaroni, for they are as partial to idle basking in the sun, as the former, and more faithfully support the character of laughing philosophers than the latter. Among the ancient sages, poverty, instead of being considered infamous, was deemed honourable; Socrates himself was rarely known to put on shoes, unless in honour of some high and solemn festival. In this part of his practice at least, the Lazzaroni may be truly styled his disciples, and in poverty they outvie the poorest cynic that ever lived. Their summum bonum seems to consist in devouring maccaroni, and in quaffing wine in an arched flowing stream, from the bottle. This fraternity ranks not now so high in public estimation, as did the members of the ancient body; and I much fear that whatever the

nature of their services to the late king, they would, in one sense at least, have been placed by Malthus among the unproductive classes; and that had this great man been consulted, he would have advised their rulers to incite them to forsake the philosophy whose principles and practice consist in sloth, for that which holds occupation to be the end and aim of life.

The Studii Publici or Public Museum, comprises a new and extensive range of buildings not unworthy of being made the depository of the remains of antiquity which are here gathered together. In its spacious halls the antiquarian will find abundant subjects for study and meditation. In contemplating the various rooms in which the remains of antiquity are arranged, one is struck with the strict jealousy with which every thing is preserved; all that can be put under lock and key is so protected, and the keepers of a menagerie are not more watchful of their charge than the custodii of the museum at Naples, of the curiosities entrusted to their care. The visitor has to perambulate as many divisions as there are wards in an ample

hospital, before he can see the whole. In the first apartment entered, to make use of a medical phrase, the worst cases only are received: busts without heads, heads without bodies, trunks without legs, or arms,—in short, mutilated forms, the mere despair of surgery. In the next, the situation of the heroic sufferers is not quite so desperate; many of them have been pretty successfully patched, and some few want but little of a very perfect cure. In the saloons that follow, again, the recovery of the patients from their numerous accidents by flood and field, is often so wonderful, that it becomes hard to believe they were ever on the list of the wounded. Among the finest marbles of the Neapolitan collection must be reckoned the celebrated statue of Hercules, the supposed work of Glycon, the colossal statue of Flora, and the Venus of Praxiteles, the rival of her of the Medici, who here appears in all the freshness of health and beauty, which graced her divine prototype, in the hour when she first rose from out the sea.

In the picture gallery, the Danaë of Titian,

under a shower of gold, is above all price; and may be truly said to enrich the eye.

No stranger can long remain in Naples without feeling a wish arise to explore Mount Vesuvius. Encountered every morning, with the same unchangeable aspect, and usually capt by a cloud of smoke, it arrests the eye a hundred times again in the course of every day, and seems to invite a narrower inspection of its wonders. Late in the month of June, when the summer heats are nearly at their height, the night is the only season when the ascent of Vesuvius can be prudently, and above all, comfortably undertaken. The numerous party of which the writer formed one, therefore, left the city in carriages, at the hour of eleven, when revelry and dissipation are at their height, and were quickly whirled out of earshot of every sound of merriment.

The air was delightfully soft, the stars shone with the unrivalled lustre they possess in the latitudes of Southern Italy. Nothing, however, was to be seen, but the occasional figure of the drowsy peasant wending to his home. At Portici the court of the palace is crossed, the high road

actually passing through the royal yard: here all was silence, not a sound was heard save the rattle of our vehicles, and nothing was to be seen except the reflected light of our lamps from the sentinel's firelock. Upon reaching Resina, our party alighted at an obscure inn, where asses and guides are always procured by those who are about to undertake the ascent of the mountain.

The ascent at first is very gradual, the road winding through vineyards and orchards. The moon not having yet risen, the prospect was obscure, and it was not until we had reached a narrow dell, with clustering trees on one side, and crumbling lava on the other, that we could obtain anything like an accurate view of our situation. The acclivity, which is crowned by a small hermitage, now rose to view. A painter might have taken the singular group we formed, as preceded by our torch-bearers, we were winding our way up this last eminence, for the subject of a sketch. His fancy might easily have transformed us into a body of way-worn pilgrims, within sight of the wished-for shrine, the object of their journeying.

The fortitude of the hermit, who makes this cell his dwelling-place, must surely be great, to chaunt his prayers and praises, with the thunder of Vesuvius, for his chorus; but custom will rob even a volcano of its terrors.

On reaching the asylum of the holy man, we looked for nothing but a pilgrim's fare, a cup of water, a crust of bread, and a benedecite; but whatever austerities he may practise on himself, he enforces none upon his tired visitors. His hospitable board was laid out with delicious fruit, wholesome bread, and excellent lacryma Christi. No return for the entertainment thus afforded is required beyond what gratitude and charity induce the partaker to leave behind him. Shortly afterwards, leaving our cattle, we began to mount the last acclivity of Vesuvius. While at the bottom of the cone, we became aware of the presence of a party who had preceded us; they presented rather a picturesque appearance, as their forms were alternately revealed and lost, and as their torches appeared and disappeared, like an ignus fatuus, at intervals.

After a few hours of weary toiling, we stood, at length, on the very edge of what we judged to be the crater; and so it proved in fact; for here we paced around the hideous gulph upon the giddy border, which, in the darkness around us, seemed like the very seam and end of space. Our guide now told us to prepare for a descent into the crater. Divesting ourselves of our boots, as directed, we plunged into the abyss, sinking at every step deep in the heated sand. As soon as we had gained the bottom, we trod on hardened sulphureous ground, divided occasionally by clefts, into which a stick inserted for an instant, came forth in a blaze. We advanced forward, till a cloud of sulphureous smoke arrested our progress by its suffocating quality; this, however, having soon dispersed, we renewed our scrutiny on every side, and supporting ourselves on our staves, we seemed to realize the picture Milton has drawn of the fallen angels stalking over the infernal marl.

Our guide, thinking we had advanced as far as was consistent with safety, warned us to return; but our curiosity prompted us to gain the internal

crater, at all hazards. On stooping over the brink of this, we could see into the fearful cauldron, and even distinguish the burning masses that bestrewed the bottom, which looked like that of some huge furnace. A short time sufficed to satisfy the curiosity of the greater number of us in the perilous situation in which we were; but two of our friends insisted on remaining behind. We had hardly descended from the inner cone, before a loud noise, like that of field artillery, alarmed us for their safety; we turned, but all was lost in clouds of smoke, accompanied with a discharge into the air of mingled ashes and red-hot cinders. After a few moments of painful suspense, we perceived, with joy, our lost friends returning,—one however lame, and supported by the other. Upon seeing the cloud rising, they, it appears, had thrown themselves down on the outside of the crater; and fortunately for them, the wind having drifted the stifling vapour and destructive matter to the side opposite to that on which they lay, they escaped with a few bruises on their legs and arms, and a rent or two in their clothes.

We hurried out of this region of destruction, and on again reaching the top of the mountain beheld a prospect, which, from the summit of Vesuvius alone, can be perfectly enjoyed,—the bay of Naples, lighted up by the beams of the rising sun.

On emerging from the crater, the effect of the view that burst upon us was strikingly magnificent. Even at this early hour, the air possessed the most complete transparency; there was no misty veil obscuring the distant prospect; the vessels, as in northern climes, were not drifting along half hid in haze, the mountains were not capt in clouds, there was no fog resting in the valleys,—but the Bay of Naples spread out beneath us, with its broad clear mirror, as blue and waveless as the cloudless sky above it. On the left, the steep sides of Ischia and Tiberian Capri, were gilded by the beams of the rising sun; opposite were the hills of Posilipo, ascending like hanging gardens from the sea; before them, the full sailed vessel, as distinct to the eye as in the glare of noon, sleeping tranquilly on the ocean, and in the deep bosom of

the semicircle lay Naples, revealed in all its splendour, as if darkness had passed over it, like a cloud from the sun, and left all obvious and resplendent as it stood through the bye-gone day.

CHAPTER XIII.

Classic scenes around Naples — The Orlando Furioso — Olympia — Orlando's madness—The Story of Isabella and Zerbino—Astolpho's Journey to the Moon—Ariosto, the Homer of the Italians—The great inventive genius of Ariosto—His irregularities amply redeemed by his wit and fancy—Contrasted with the Author of the Fairy Queen.

THE country around Naples is the hallowed theatre of epic poetry. Homer and Virgil have peopled its shores with gods and heroes; heaven and hell have both been drawn in these classic bounds; and we may imagine Tasso, while yet a boy, gathering shells along this strand, in his rambles from his native Sorrento, feeding his young mind with poetic imaginings, and possibly conceiving the first weak germs of those creations which he

afterwards embodied with such eastern magnificence, in his Gerusalemme. In view of the very coasts where many of the finest passages of that poem were composed, we shall select a few for admiration; but before doing this, let us turn to the great rival of the bard of Jerusalem, to Ariosto, who, having preceded him in point of time, naturally claims priority of attention. In the age of Louis XIV. when Boileau reigned paramount, and the "Art Poétique," was considered the sole standard of poetic propriety; when every thing was measured by rule and compass; and "to snatch a grace beyond the reach of art" was deemed a high crime and misdemeanor; romantic poets, like Ariosto, who spurned these arbitrary shackles, were considered as having forfeited all claim to the laurel.

But these days of frigidity, thanks to the influence of nature, and better taste, are long past; and if a fertility of invention that never tires, if a masterly delineation of varied character, if battles and single engagements, told with all the fire of Homer, if the passions of the human heart,—

love, jealousy, rage, and madness, depicted with the hand of a master, if an easy, playful wit, conveying under the veil of allegory, lessons of wisdom, by which the narration is ever enlivened, —if all these eminent qualities constitute a valid title to the epic crown, Ariosto makes out the most irrefragable claim to the wreath in his ORLANDO FURIOSO. Or, otherwise, and to narrow the field of view, if the secret of conferring pleasure, and the art of pouring delight into the mind by an endless succession of incidents be the highest excellence of a poet, who, in ancient or in modern times, can be placed in contrast with Ariosto, in the power he possesses of arresting the attention, and carrying his reader along with him?

In selecting a few characteristic passages from the ORLANDO, in exemplification of these various qualities, so rich and luxuriant a field presents itself, that one is at a loss where to choose. In the very opening of the poem, in the pursuit of Angelica by her lovers, are passages of great beauty. In almost every canto some new episode occurs, and relieves without disturbing the original

one, hurrying the reader away from one scene of enchantment to another. What more interesting than the tale of Olympia rescued by Orlando, after being abandoned by Berino, and exposed on a naked rock to a sea monster; fancy can scarcely imagine a more exquisite picture than the following, of beauty rendered still more lovely by affliction:—

" Her face was such as sometimes in the spring
We see a doubtful sky, when on the plain
A shower descends, and the sun, opening
His cloudy veil, looks out amid the rain.
And as the nightingale then loves to sing
From branch of verdant stem her dulcet strain,
So in her beauteous tears his pinions bright
Love bathes, rejoicing in the crystal light[1]."

How charming is the description of the gardens of Alcina, where nature triumphs over art;—what a beautiful imitation is the episode of Medoro

[1] " Era il bel viso suo, quale esser suole
Da primavera alcuna volta il cielo,
Quando la pioggia cade, e a un tempo il sole
Si sgombra intorno il nubiloso velo,
E come il rosignuol dolci carole
Mena nei rami allor del verdo stelo,
Così alle belle lagrime le piume,
Si bagna amore, e gode al chiaro lume."

and Clorinda, of that of Nisus and Euryalus, surpassing the original. How profound a knowledge of the mysteries of the human heart is displayed in the character of Angelica, who, after slighting her importunate lover Orlando, yields her heart unsought to the wounded Medoro;—whilst she heals his wounds, she, in her turn, is wounded beyond the reach of art. How true to nature is the account of the mode in which the discovery of their mutual love operates on the mind of Orlando. The whole passion, indeed, is developed with matchless skill, from the first feeling of jealousy that arises in his breast, on seeing the names of Angelica and Medoro at the fountain, till it terminates in his despair and madness:—

"In a hundred knots, amid those green abodes,
In a hundred parts, their cyphered names are dight;
Whose many letters are so many goads,
Which love has in his bleeding heart core pight;
He would discredit in a thousand modes
That which he credits in his own despite;
And would perforce persuade himself that rhind,
Other Angelica than his had signed[1]."

[1] "Angelica, e Medor con cento nodi
Legati insieme, e in cento luoghi vede.

The more he tries to escape, the more he is entangled, "like the incautious bird;" even after he has beheld "their whole course of love" inscribed in the language of rapture on the cave, and its overwhelming effect has a little subsided, he still catches at a straw. "Some person," he faintly conjectures, "has thus abused her name;" and not till the shepherd has made a full disclosure of their marriage does he abandon all hope;—then, starting from the hated couch on which the happy lovers had reposed, he goes forth to the woods, and abandons himself to grief, "shedding a fountain of ceaseless tears."

With what true pathos is his deep emotion expressed, when in the natural language of a mind half-distempered, he exclaims:

Quante lettere son, tanti son chiodi,
Coi quali amore il cor gli punge e fiede,
Va col pensier cercando in mille modi
Non creder quel ch' al suo dispetto crede;
Ch' altra Angelica sia creder si sforza
C'h abbia scritto'l suo nome in quella scorza."

I am not—am not what I seem in sight:
What Roland was is dead and under ground,
Slain by that most ungrateful lady's spite,
Whose faithlessness inflicted such a wound.
Divided from the flesh, I am his sprite,
Which in this hell, tormented walks its round,
To be, but in its shadow left above,
A warning to all such as trust in love[1]."

Full well did Ariosto know the nature of this dreadful disease of the mind, when he adds, "overwhelmed and exhausted he fell to the ground, fixed his eyes motionless on the heavens, and was silent." We know of no poet who has drawn a more perfect picture of jealousy, or one more true to nature, than Ariosto, through all its stages, till it closes in madness.

What we have cited approaches the sublime; the tender tale of Isabella that follows, cannot be sur-

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[1] "Non son, non sono io quel, che pajo in viso;
Quel, ch' era Orlando, è morto, ed è sotterra;
La sua donna ingratissima l'ha ucciso,
Sì mancando di fè gli ha fatta guerra:
Io son lo spirto suo, da lui diviso,
Ch' in questo inferno tormentandosi erra,
Perchè con l'ombra sia, che sola avanza,
Esempio a chi in amor pone speranza."

passed in pathetic power of narration.—Her husband Zerbino had been mortally wounded in defending the armour of Orlando:—what deep love his dying exclamations express, when he implores her to love him after death, his only grief being to leave her unprotected:—"By that mouth, by those eyes I swear, and by those locks by which I was ensnared, my greatest torture in the world to come will be, the thought of having left thee without a friend[1];"—thus saying, she bent over him, receiv-

"At this the sorrowing Isabel, declining
Her mournful face, which with her tears o'erflows,
Towards the sufferer, and her mouth conjoining
To her Zerbino's, languid as a rose;
Rose gathered out of season, and which pining
Fades where it on the shadowy hedgerow grows,
Exclaims, "Without me, think not so my heart,
On this your last, long journey to depart[1]."

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1 "Per questa bocca, per queste occhi giuro,
Per queste chiome onde allacciato fui."

2 "A questo la mestissima Isabella,
Declinando la faccia lacrimosa,
E congiungendo la sua bocca a quella
Di Zerbin, languidetta come rosa,

ing with her mournful lips the last faint remnant of the vital spirit, until no breath remained [1].

Dying, he conjures her with failing voice, "by the love she bore him, when she left her native river, to live [2]:"—and finally concludes with these touching words:—"I know not whether these my last words, I can express so as to be understood [3]."

Rosa non colta in stagion sì ch' ella
Impallidisca in su la siepe ombrosa,
Dissi non vi pensate già, mia vita,
Far senza me quest' ultima partita."

[1] "Così dicendo, le reliquie estreme,
De lo spirto vital, che morte fura,
Va ricogliendo con le labbre meste,
Fin ch'una minima ätura vo ne reste."

[2] "Zerbin la debol voce rinforzando,
Disse, Io vi prego, e supplico, mia diva,
Per quello amor, che mi mostraste, quando,
Per me lasciaste la paterna riva."
Restiate viva."

[3] "Non credo, che queste ultime parole,
Potesse esprimer sì, che fosse inteso."

Such love as his, Isabella nobly earned by afterwards sacrificing her life to her fidelity to Zerbino.

The jealousy and loves of Bradamante and Ruggiero, which the critics consider to form the real plot of the poem, and to be intended as a delicate compliment to the house of Este, as celebrating their supposed ancestor, are not without tenderness, but are written in a lighter vein.

Of the comic portions of the poem, which are neither few, nor far between, one of the most amusing is Astolpho's voyage in the air, in which satire, wit, and power of narration are agreeably intermingled. It is this frequent intermixture of the serious and the comic, which gives that charming variety to Ariosto, which eternally delights.

Astolpho having his foot in the stirrup, on the winged griffin, posts off through the air, and without once resting by the way, passes over France, Spain, and Africa, till he arrives and lands at Nubia, to the astonishment of the upturned eyes of the wondering natives, who took him for a messenger from heaven, "while sailing on the bosom of the air."

Once fairly alighted on firm ground, he performs a very obliging service for the king of that country. The occasion of it is as follows. The monarch not being able to dine with any comfort, in consequence of rapacious harpies, who either devoured the viands placed upon the tables, or rendered them unfit for use, asks his noble guest for assistance, upon which, Astolpho bids the king be of good cheer, and promises to destroy them. Accordingly, when next they sat down to dinner, behold! the unbidden guests are arrived, as usual. Astolpho without any more ado, draws his sword, and commences hacking them in a terrible manner—but all in vain. He then bethought him of his renowned horn, as an infallible resource; but previously he orders the king and courtiers to put warm wax in their ears, to guard against the terrible noise; and lo! in a moment, with a single blast, the foul birds are dismayed and put to flight.

To follow up this victory he mounts his griffin in hot haste, and with furious pursuit chases them every step of the road to the infernal regions, where, to his surprise, he sees a young lady, by

name Lydia, hanging up, and undergoing a process of smoking for having jilted her lover upon earth. To refresh himself with a little cool air, after this very suffocating adventure, he takes a flight into the upper regions, and touches on a beautiful island, inhabited by St. John the Evangelist. Here he and his griffin get a night's lodging, and are most hospitably entertained; and he observes that the oats given to his griffin were of the first quality, as was also the ambrosia of which he himself partook. Next morning he is taken by the good Saint on a voyage of discovery to the moon. On the road, St. John informs him, as they drive along in their easy chariot, that Orlando was deprived of his senses, for having fought with his cousin Rinaldo. At the end of the journey, Astolpho, when set down in the moon, was, of course, very much astonished at all he beheld. Among other wonderful things, he saw in a valley between two mountains, the following list of lost treasures: — The prayers and vows of relapsing sinners; the tears and sighs of lovers; the long idleness of ignorant men. Near these were placed

large inflated bladders, which were once the crowns of Assyria and Persia. In a corner, quite by itself, he beheld the good deeds that people order to be performed after their death; also a great quantity of bird-lime snares, which were once—oh ye fair! your charms; the gift of Constantine to the Church, which once smelt very sweet, was likewise there, now in very bad odour. But the most curious things that struck his sight, were the wits of mortals, a kind of subtle liquor, kept in bottles well closed—all in regular order; the largest bottle of all was that which was labelled, the wit of Orlando. This, as a thing to be expected, did not surprise him; but what truly did astonish him, was to find the greater portion of his own wit there too, and that of many of his friends, who were considered as very wise men upon earth. However, being permitted to take possession of his own property, he lived very wisely, as the story runs, ever after. Having, also, as desired by the Evangelist, taken the bottle in which Orlando's wit was kept, he descends to the earth, and seeing his friend, by accident raging and out of his senses, he had him

held down and secured, and applying the mouth of the bottle accurately to his patient's nose, having kept his thumb on it till all was ready, lest any of the precious particles should escape, Orlando by one vigorous inspiration was perfectly restored to his senses.

In the same vein as this comic episode, is that of Michael finding disunion, not in hell, where he expected, but—"credat Judæus Apella," in a full conclave of cardinals.

It would exceed our limits, to extract any of his descriptions of the famous battles of Paris, which match even those of Homer's heroes; or any of the other single encounters, which the Italians are never weary of perusing; nor can we dilate upon the blemishes of this delightful poet,—his occasional grotesqueness, his incessant interruptions of the narrative, and his too warm descriptions. The first of these defects is covered by the light vein of playful humour, with which they are surrounded; and the last must secure forgiveness, when the age in which the poet lived is taken into the account. Indeed, a little reflection on the many high qualities

which distinguish Ariosto, and to which allusion has already been made, especially his boundless powers of invention, and truth to nature in depicting passion, lead us to agree with the opinion of many of his countrymen, who consider him the Homer of their literature. Ariosto unquestionably possesses, in the most eminent degree, that highest poetic excellence, the creative genius. But in looking round for a poet with whom more aptly to compare Ariosto, our own Spenser naturally suggests himself,—as following the same walk of poetry, as the chronicler of marvellous love adventures, and chivalrous feats of arms, intermingled with countless allegories. The English poet, however, though drawing from the richest vein of virgin ore, though abounding with innumerable exquisite descriptions, is too deficient in taste, wit, style, and elegance of language, and, above all, too long-winded and fatiguing in his allegories, to justify a comparison with the Italian bard. Perhaps there is none of our poets—however dissimilar they are in their general subjects—to whom Ariosto approaches more frequently or more nearly than to

the divine Shakspeare. In a masterly command of the passions, a deep knowledge of human character, and a wide empire over spirits and the elements, the genius that imagined and described the gardens of Alcina will bear comparison even with that which created Ariel and the other wonderful beings that people The Tempest. An endless fund of wit and humour, the same inequalities, and equally redeeming beauties, are qualities which, combined, entitle the "bard of chivalry, romance and princely worth" to be approximated at least, and contrasted with, the first of dramatists, the poet of all ages and of all nations.

CHAPTER XIV.

Tasso—The Jerusalem Delivered—The approach of the Christian army to Jerusalem—Armida's Art—The first of modern epics, compared with the Lusiad and Henriade—Pastoral poetry—The Aminta of Tasso—Il Pastor Fido of Guarini—The Bucolics of Sannazrius—Superiority of Italian pastoral poetry—Latin epics of Vida, Fracastorius and Trissino—Their indifferent choice of subjects.

If Ariosto gloriously sinned against the laws prescribed to the epic muse, no such blemish, at least, can be imputed to his great successor. It has been remarked, that the lives and writings of men of genius often reflect each other. In none, is this principle, if we admit it to be one, better illustrated than in Torquato Tasso. His Sonnets and Letters are full of that sadness and tender melancholy indicative of the many misfortunes he experienced

through life's sorrowful journey. Scarcely had he emerged from childhood, before the death of a tender mother, and the derangement of his father's affairs, threw him on the world almost unprotected. He was not long, however, without a pretended patron; for the renown of his early productions soon conciliated for him the unfortunate friendship, as it proved in its result, of the tyrannical Alphonso of Este. The cruel treatment he experienced at this Prince's court, the poverty he had to struggle with, the passion, fatal to his happiness, which he conceived for Leonora of Este, his subsequent confinement in a miserable dungeon, and the insults he suffered from the satellites of despotism, are well-known events, which brought him to the very verge of insanity, and touched his susceptible mind with that woeful depression to which, through life, he continued an habitual martyr.

His famous Jerusalem Delivered (though the nature of the work did not admit of much manifestation of personal feeling,) is throughout replete with a serious cast of thought, which never even relaxes into a smile; so unlike was the mental

constitution of Tasso, in this respect, to that of his great and lively predecessor, Ariosto. Independently of his mind being of this graver cast, as all his works evince it to have been, the high models of Grecian and Roman poetry in Homer and Virgil, which he seems to have kept continually in his eye, prompted him to observe that dignity, that clear order, that elegance of style and language, for which his great poem is so much distinguished. The too close imitation of the poets mentioned, and the profound knowledge of the ancients, with which his mind was stored, are supposed by some to have overlaid or weakened his original powers. The extensive acquaintance he had with the scholastic learning of his day, too, probably betrayed him into the blemishes we remark in his works,—the conceits in which he occasionally indulges, the deviations from the language of passion, which are particularly observable in the soliloquies of Rinaldo, after having unknowingly slain his beloved Clorinda, disguised as a warrior, the quaintnesses and similar unimpassioned style of Erminia, in lamenting over her

apparently and presumed dead lover Tancred; and the art which too conspicuously predominates over nature, in the account we have of the gardens of Armida. These are, however, the mere spots in the sun, the flaws which it requires the magnifying lens of criticism to discover; his fine delineation of the character of the wise and pious Godfrey, of the bold Rinaldo, of the brave and tender Tancred, on the one side; and of the bewitching Armida, that beautiful creation of the poet's fancy, the warlike Clorinda, the unshaken Solyman, on the other; the liquid eloquence of the speeches, the dignity of the subject, generally that enthusiasm in treating it, with which his religious feelings inspired him, are eminent beauties, which must strike the coldest and least favourably-disposed reader.

Of that piety, which formed so prominent a feature in the character of Tasso, what finer instance can be cited, than his conception of the impression made by the first appearance of Jerusalem upon the Christian host—

" Wing'd is each heart, and winged every heel;
They fly, yet notice nòt how fast they fly;
But by the time the dewless meads reveal
The fervent sun's ascension in the sky,
Lo! tower'd Jerusalem salutes the eye!
A thousand pointing fingers tell the tale;
Jerusalem! a thousand voices cry,
All hail Jerusalem! hill, down, and dale
Catch the glad sound, and shout, Jerusalem, all hail!

" To the pure pleasure which that first far view,
In their reviving spirits sweetly shed,
Succeeds a deep contrition, feelings new,—
Grief touched with awe, affection mix'd with dread:
Scarce dare they now upraise the abject head,
Or turn toward Zion their desiring eyes,
The elected city! where Messias bled,
Defrauded Death of his long tyrannies,
New clothed his limbs with life, and re-assumed the skies.

" Low accents, plaintive whispers, groans profound,
Sighs of a nation that in gladness grieves,
And melancholy murmurs float around,
Till the sad air a thrilling sound receives,
Like that which sobs amidst the dying leaves,
When with autumnal winds the forest waves;
Or dash of an insurgent sea, that heaves
On lonely rocks, or lock'd in weeping caves,
Hoarse through their hollow aisles in wild low cadence raves[1]."

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1 " Ali ha ciascuno al core, ed ali al piede:
Nè del suo ratto andar però s' accorge.

—Nothing can be more beautiful than the whole passage, nothing can be nobler than the last simile.

Tasso felt the passion of love in all its fervour; if his whole life did not prove this, the perhaps too

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Ma quando il sol gli aridi campi fiede
Con raggi assai ferventi, e in alto sorge,
Ecco apparir Gerusalem si vede,
Ecco additar Gerusalem si scorge,
Ecco da mille voci unitamente
Gerusalemme salutar si sente.

" Al gran piacer che quella prima vista
Dolcemente spirò nell' altrui petto,
Alta contrizion successe, mista
Di timoroso e reverente affetto.
Osano appena d' innalzar la vista.
Ver la città, di Cristo albergo eletto;
Dove morì, dove sepolto fue,
Dove poi rivestì le membra sue.

" Sommessi accenti, e tacite parole,
Rotti singulti, e flebili sospiri
Della gente, che in un s' allegra e duole,
Fin che per l' aria un mormorio s' aggiri,
Qual nelle folte selve udir si suole,
S' avvien che tra le frondi il vento spiri;
O quale infra gli scogli, o presso ai lidi
Sibila il mar, percosso, in rauchi stridi."

glowing description given of the love scene between Rinaldo and Armida in the garden, would be ample testimony.

Nor could the poet, perhaps, have given so striking and finished a picture of a coquette in Armida, when she tries and succeeds, alas! but too well, in seducing the Christian heroes,—had he not moved, as a privileged person, in the brilliant circle of fascinating beauties that adorned the court of Ferrara.

The following picture of female deceit appears not to be drawn from books:

" She ceased;—a generous and majestic scorn
Fired all her features to a rose-like red,
And then she made as she would have withdrawn,
With grief and anger in her farewell tread;
Her eyes 'twixt passion and resentment shed
Tears thick as summer heat-drops—tears that shine,
With the sun's golden rays athwart them spread,
Like falling pearls, like crystals argentine,
Or sparkling opal, drops from some far Indian mine[1]."

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[1] " Quì tacque; e parve ch' un regale sdegno,
E generoso l' accendesse in vista:
E'l piè volgendo, di partir fea segno,
Tutta negli atti dispettosa e trista.

This sorrow, which was only feigned, drew real tears from many, and softened the hardest hearts [1].

As far as epic dignity is concerned, Tasso, by the common consent of nations, takes rank after Homer and Virgil; the moderns have produced no poet, if we except Milton, who by having adhered to the heroic model, can dispute the precedence. The French used formerly to boast of their Henriade, and talk of the "clinquant of Tasso's tinsel:" if their love of that historical and political rhapsody, furnished with just so much poetry as serves to keep the inert mass together, still continues, they stand alone in their admiration. The Portuguese have better pretensions, and may well be proud of the elevation and classic purity of the Lusiad; from

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Il pianto si spargea senza ritegno,
Com'ira suol produrlo a dolor mista:
E le nascenti lagrime, a vederle,
Erano a' rai del sol cristalli e perle."

[1] "Questo finto dolor da molti elice
Lagrime vere, e i cor più duri spetra."

which Tasso has in part copied his picture of the gardens of Armida; but the truly national poem of Camoens is too deficient in character and dramatic interest to put in jeopardy the laurel crown, which having already flourished for centuries, will continue to the end of time, with unfading leaves, to bind the brow of Tasso.

It was in the romantic vales of Baiæ and Posilippo, teeming almost spontaneously with the productions that minister to man's necessities, that the sweet pastoral of Aminta probably took its birth. There also, inspired by the genius of the place, Sannazario conceived, and in his romantic *Mergolino* gave being to that sweetest creation of the poet's fancy, the enchanting *Arcadia*,—that empire of the golden age, of innocence and love, of those halcyon days, when under the shade of aged elms, shepherds told their simple tales, to the coy nymphs who responded to their song.

In these sequestered valleys, the despairing Aminta at last received the relenting Sylvia into his happy arms: all nature around teaches lessons of love, as the inspired Daphne exclaims,—

"Think you then the patriarch of the fold an enemy to the lamb; think you then the lord of the herd an enemy to the heifer; think you then the turtle an enemy to his faithful dove; think you then the sweet spring time the season of enmity and anger, which now merry and jocund, inspires animals, inspires man, inspires woman, inspires the universe with love? Do you not observe, how all things are filled with love, with a love full of happiness and joy? Behold the turtle yonder, who wooing with sweet murmurs, kisses his tender mate. Listen to that nightingale, who hops from branch to branch, while singing, 'I love—I love[1].'"

Who would not agree with such convincing argu-

[1] "Stimi dunque nemico
Il monton de l' agnella?
De la giovenca il toro?
Stimi dunque nemico
Il tortore alla fida tortorella?
Stimi dunque stagione
Di nimicizia, e d' ira
La dolce Primavera?
C' or allegra, e ridente
Riconsiglia ad amare
Il mondo, e gli animali
E gli uomini, e le donne, e non t'accorgi,
Come tutte le cose, [Or

ments, all so natural, and from one so skilled in the mystery she taught?

On the shady banks of Posilippo, it was, that Sannazarius sang in his sweet *Arcadia*, the charms of his native place, in those delightful bucolics, whose harmony of verse and elegant simplicity enchant the reader; what noble bursts of eloquence is he not inspired with, against the enslavers of his beloved Naples!

Surrounded by such scenes as those that gird this favoured spot, Guarini had before him the very pictures he has drawn in his *Pastor Fido*,—that witty but fantastical pastoral,—where the willing nymph subdues her stony-hearted lover. Here, too, might be fitly practised that lesson of love which the poet teaches with such profundity, on the agree-

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Or son innamorate,
D' un amor pien di gioia, e di salute?
Mira là quel colombo,
Con che dolce susurro lusignando
Bacia la sua compagna:
Odi quell' usignuolo,
Che va di ramo in ramo
Cantando, 'Io amo—Io amo.'"

able but dangerous art of kissing; and in that charming passage, where the nymphs contend who shall win the crown for their proficiency in that sweet science, a handsome youth disguised in feminine attire, being very properly appointed sole judge of the respective merits of the fair aspirants, the poet has shown how truly he was master of his subject.

Though idyls, pastorals, and bucolics, "et hoc genus omne," are at present a little obsolete, such is the aversion of this refined and unsympathizing age to pristine simplicity and nature, yet if an exception can be made to the sweeping condemnation of productions of this nature, it must be in favour of those of Italy. There is so much of absolute nature in her pastorals, different from the love-sick puling, and childish moping that disfigure the same class of poems of other countries, that they bear away the palm from all that modern times has produced, in this walk of the art poetic. They often depict true passion; or, if they do degenerate into conceit, and become fantastical, these faults are usually redeemed by lively wit, and piquant dialogue: besides,

the very harmony of the language carries the reader along: I am not sure that I ever enjoyed any more delightful idle occupation than I have done in reading these rural songs, under the soft canopy of a Neapolitan sky, and in view of such scenery as that of Baiæ and Vesuvius.

Having but just mentioned the two great epic bards of Italy, Ariosto and Tasso, I cannot refrain from briefly alluding to another class of the same order of writers, although of much inferior rank and merit; I mean her Latin epic poets.

The first in the importance and dignity of his productions, is Vida, the Bishop of Alba. If in his art of poetry, he has imitated Horace, he appears, to have adhered in his *Christiad*, to the Æneid as a model, with still closer fidelity. It is written therefore, in the most Virgilian metre, full of Virgilian imitations, and not without a strong spark of poetic inspiration. But the idea of singing the passion of our Saviour in so many books, and then introducing, by way of episode, his previous life and miracles, as in the *Æneid*, Eneas gives Dido

an account of the fall of Troy, and of his voyage till cast on the Carthaginian shore, though composed under the influence of truly religious feelings, is not conceived in the genuine spirit of poetry. The subject in any shape was impracticable.

The DE PARTU VIRGINIS of Sannazarius, though less faulty in the manner of treating the subject, and not without many sublime passages, labours under the same general dulness which attaches to subjects taken from the New Testament, when attempted to be made more of than they are in the simple original, and diverted from their legitimate end of edification, to be devoted to that of amusement.

Of a very different, but still more exceptionable character, is the SYPHILIS of Fracastorius. It is much to be regretted that he was not more fortunate in his choice of a subject; for the philosophical dignity and ingenuity with which he handles his untractable materials; and the beautiful episode of the youth who sunk in the first blush of life's morning, whom all the nymphs and virgins loved, when

living, and wept when dead, sung too in strains nowise unworthy of Virgil, make us lament that he had not drawn, in his native tongue, from a purer source in Helicon.

The *Italia Liberata* of Trissino, or *Italy delivered from the Goths*, by Belisarius, though written on the strict model of Homer, is really much too long, and much too dull to tempt the generality of readers to its perusal.

These Latin epics, save as monuments of the literary taste, and spirit of the age in which they were written, have now no other advantage, save as models in colleges to the youth who are ambitious of excelling in the composition of Latin verse.

Enough, we think, has been already cited to prove, that in the epic, which has long been held as occupying the highest pinnacle of the Parnassian height, from the superiority of their first, and the number and excellence of their second class of poets, the Italians must be allowed to reign supreme. Nor is their sovereignty likely to be disturbed; for whether we want the genius to appreciate, or that we have not the leisure, in these busy

and mechanical days, necessary to go through such lengthy productions; it may be laid down as an axiom, that nothing of a serious nature, which is in future intended to be read, must exceed the limits of a few moderate cantos.

CHAPTER XV.

Pompeii—Posilippo—Baiæ—The villa of Lucullus, a great epicurean—Hortensius and his love for fish—The hunting lodge of the late king—The unpopularity of the reigning king—Cajeta, the nurse of Eneas—Terracina—The pomp of the Mayor—Route to Albano.

"I stood within the city disinterr'd,
And heard the autumnal leaves like light foot-falls,
Of spirits passing through the streets; and heard
The mountain's slumbrous voice at intervals
Thrill through those roofless halls;
The oracular thunder penetrating, shook
The listening soul in my suspended blood;
I felt that earth, out of her deep heart spoke—
I felt, but heard not."

SHELLEY.

THE antiquities of Pompeii have been so beautifully illustrated in the work of Sir W. Gell, and the eventful story of this City of the Dead, has

been so charmingly told by a writer, to whom the magic mantle of Scott appears to have descended, that it would be useless to repeat information with which every one is now familiar.

Vesuvius and its steeps have their peculiar and terrific interests, but the opposite shores have greater charms for the lover of poetry and classic recollections. To them, in a soft and lovely morning in the latter end of May, I performed, in company with a friend, one of those delightful excursions, which forms a sunny spot amid life's sombre recollections. This season of the year; in every clime, is charming; but in the region of Volcanos, and Circean allurements, under cloudless skies, reflected by unruffled waves, it has an overpowering influence, which leaves not one of the senses unsatisfied, and renders the mere consciousness of existence a blessing and a joy, till then unknown. On each side, on our route to Posilipo, we beheld prospects which told with double effect on our accordant feelings:—vines growing carelessly amid corn and maize, and here and there a lazy husbandman reaping the premature yellow ear, that seemed

by its ripeness to chide his idle hand. After we had passed the famous cavern of Posilipo, we traversed several miles of country, which looked like a deserted Eden; there was a universal stillness in the air, or if this was interrupted now and then, it was by the carolling of some bird, which seemed by its familiarity a stranger to the sight of man.

Making the usual arrangements at Pozzuoli for boats and donkeys, we hastened to the spots which Virgil and Homer have made familiar and immortal. By the aid of our sturdy beasts, Avernus, with all its pictured horrors, quickly opened upon us:—I know not, whether it were affectation or folly, and the reader may style it which he will, but I piously disposed myself to believe implicitly in the poet's description; I therefore opened my Virgil, and commenced reading the descent of Eneas to hell, as I would the Articles of the Christian Belief. After one little effort of volition, all became easy, so having first made due sacrifice of our provisions, and poured out a pious libation from our wine flasks, we began to search for the "aureus et foliis et lento vimine ramus;" and having found

a rod of the description in question, we applied it to the sides of our beasts, and followed our guide—a second sibyl in point of knowledge—in solemn silence.

We proceeded, as was fitting, to pay our respects to the Sibyl in her cave, but did not find her goddess-ship at home; we learnt afterwards that we had not called at the right place, as her abode is, or was, beyond Cumæ, on the sea-side: this afforded a satisfactory explanation of her absence, and a balm to our disappointment.

Surrounded, as the Lake is, by high hills, and thick lofty trees, there is a certain gloom about it, well befitting its name and character; but with all respect for Virgil's accuracy, I must state, that I could not hear the sounds of the lashes, nor the cries of those tortured by the decrees of Rhadamanthus; for the credit of Paganism, perhaps, the noise of the neighbouring volcano may have alarmed King Pluto, and induced him to shift his quarters.

Till the time of Augustus, when these groves were cut down, the vulgar Romans had a secret horror of this Lake and its environs, and could

never be induced to enter them. The circumstance that Virgil mentions of birds never flying over the Lake, may have been true, as in the time of Boccaccio, fishes were found dead, floating on the water, killed by its sulphureous ingredients.

Leaving this Cimmerian region, which as Homer said, the sun never visited, we wandered to the Elysian Fields; and here I must remark, that however attractive these meads may have been of yore, to heroes, lovers, and poets, none of these happy shades would much care to dwell in them in their present rude and uncultivated state.

It is curious to observe how the different poets have peopled these regions. Homer, who may be considered as the founder of the poetic hell, after giving the particulars of an interesting interview between Ulysses and his mother Anticlea, about the destinies of their house, and passing in brief review the Grecian heroes and demi-gods, instantly breaks off when he hears the sound of the tortures. Virgil imitating pretty closely his great original, enters a little more into the sufferings, and appears not to shrink for a while from listening to the lashes

of Tisiphone. Dante, not only gives a diffuse account of the infernal regions; but depicts in a most circumstantial manner, the various crimes of the wicked, and the exact punishments, awarded to their delinquencies. Ariosto, incidentally only, alludes to hell, where a young lady is represented as hanging up, and suffocated with smoke, for having trifled with her lover's feelings. Tasso merely puts some fine speeches into the mouths of his demons; and our own Milton, writing expressly on the subject, gives a sublime, but by no means a painful description of the abode of his fallen angels. In the proud feelings of independence they exhibit, and the prospect they cherish of the future indulgence of revenge, they appear about as well off as the heroes of the other poets. The taste of the age, and perhaps his subject, did not allow him to enter into a description of sufferings. There is one point, however, upon which they all appear unanimous, this is, in giving the poets a place in the Elysian Fields—a very commendable regard for their own fraternity.

The surrounding scenery and objects have not

quite so poetic an interest. In the Grotto del Cane, the progress of science, has shown us that it is carbonic acid gas, which is the noxious vapour that suffocates dogs and other small animals, a phenomenon for which Addison was so greatly puzzled to assign an adequate cause. In the baths of Nero, famous for their sulphureous effluvia, and for curing rheumatism, two eggs were boiled by the natural heat of the water. Cumæ, a little above Avernus, which, according to Strabo, was the oldest of the Grecian colonies in Italy, and was once so flourishing, has now nothing left but the ruins of an old wall and aqueduct. It enjoys a good view of the sea and Linturum, where Scipio died, after having bid adieu to his ungrateful country.

Returning to Baiæ, that luxurious winter retreat of the Romans, we tried to discover, but in vain, "where unmindful of the tomb, they built edifices into the sea." There were some foundations to be seen still under water; they were not the remains of houses, however, but evidently constructed for the purpose of fishing. The ancient Romans, to

judge from the loving protection they accorded to fish, would have made excellent Catholics; only we do not hear that they were at all inclined to fasting. The villa of Lucullus, that wealthy epicurean, stands on an eminence hard by; adjoining is the Piscina mirabile, said to have been a Reservoir of fresh water, for the use of the Roman fleet. The Piscinæ, or fish-ponds of Hortensius, are also shown, and from their extent would prove him to have been the first fishmonger of his day. I know not whether it was he who fed his fish with human bodies; but I believe it was later in the time of the Emperors when this was done. It is related of another Roman Consul, that he went into full mourning for the death of a beloved trout; and of some one else, still more tender-hearted, that he burst into tears on hearing of the sudden death of an esteemed salmon; but a still more surprising tale is that told of Hortensius, who distinguished his favourite fishes by fastening necklaces around their throats, and knew them all by their names, to which they answered, by coming towards him when

he called: such were the good feelings that then existed between flesh and fish; St. Anthony preaching to the fishes, is the only modern parallel.

Upon the coast at this place the late King had a hunting-lodge, where he was fond of indulging in his favourite field sports—the only worldly cares the good easy monarch took interest in: his open and familiar address, however, endeared him to his subjects. The present King is viewed with very different eyes; his fickleness of temper and arbitrary disposition having rendered him very unpopular. The Neapolitans have experienced a very great loss in the overthrow of Murat's government. The good roads he constructed, the encouragement he gave to commerce, the improvements he introduced into the judicial system, the attention he paid to education by founding elementary schools, and the excellent system of military discipline he established, were advantages that compensated for the severity of his military rule. The two last improvements connected with education and the army are the only

ones retained by the present government; all things else being replaced on their old footing; consisting, namely, in a despotic government conducted ostensibly by three secretaries of state, but really under the complete control of the King; and in nearly as arbitrary and confused a judicial system, as that which prevails in the Roman states. The King has greatly disappointed the hopes which his prepossessing manners on his accession to the throne led the people to entertain; at that time, to show how well he was liked, and as a compliment, I presume, to our nation, a rumour was circulated that the English were entitled to half the honour of his birth at least; and a certain frankness and bluntness of manner, a straight forwardness of purpose, and an openness of countenance, tended to corroborate the scandal; but if there were ever any foundation for the tale which spoke him sprung of so good a stock, his relapsing into the old system of misrule, whether from caprice, or under the influence of the Roman or the Austrian court, and his bigotry in lately forbidding the erection of a Protestant house of

worship, must make the English disclaim him as one of their natural children.

In order to enjoy the scenery of the coast, and to follow Æneas in his invasion of Latium, we returned by sea to Rome, bidding a final adieu to this seductive abode of Parthenope, to Naples, and its magnificent bay. We touched at Miseno, and devoted a plentiful libation of wine to the memory of that expert trumpeter Miseno, who, doubtless, as Virgil says, is fully consoled, for having been drowned by the envious sea-god Triton, by the honour of giving his name to the Cape.

The next place of note we coasted by, in pursuing the track of the pious Æneas, was Mount Cajeta, where he gave eternal fame to his dear nurse Cajeta,

"Æternam moriens famam Cajeta dedisti,"

by the erection of a monument: it is to be doubted whether a modern Prince would now do as much for his own mother. Æneas was a truly exemplary character, a fond father, a good son, a kind master, and a really pious man; had he been living in the Christian era, he certainly

would have been canonized. What a contrast to that profane fellow, the swift-footed Achilles, who is eternally quarrelling, and swearing, and defying his lawful Prince! how different the Christian practice of Æneas, who, in difficulties, always throws himself on his knees, and prays like a very saint, his eyes addressed to Heaven, and full of tears.

At Terracina, the far-shining Anxur, we were compelled to put in by a trifling stress of weather, which would have been nothing to an English sailor, but was quite appalling to our timid Italian navigator. Terracina is on a very lofty hill; it was on its broad eminence that the wealthy Romans retired, in summer, for the benefit of the cooling breezes of the sea. In modern times, the Popes have used it as a stronghold for keeping their treasure in periods of danger. The excellent drainage of part of the neighbouring Pontine marshes, has rendered the town of Terracina safe to spend the night at; the accommodations, however, are very bad, no milk, no butter, and indifferent fish. I do not know how people can be

healthy, in any place where they have such poor sustenance; as a specimen of their food, I observed two countrymen fishing for frogs in the Pontine drains; their method of catching them was by putting a bit of raw meat on a hook; there was no lack of sport, and a savoury dish was in store, no doubt, for some Italian gourmand.

It being quite an event for a steam-boat to enter the harbour, all the town flocked to see it; even the mayor, in full state, accompanied by the vicar of the parish, condescended to gratify his scientific eyes with the inspection of the vessel. Human nature has not changed since the time of Horace; for this high dignitary made as much parade in going off to the steamer in a boat, as the insane Pretor, whom the Roman poet alludes to, did in his journey to Brundusium.

Our captain, by whom we were thus detained weather-bound, was a good specimen of a Neapolitan, in whom excessive indolence, and a strong disposition for pleasure, were harmoniously combined. Of the first quality, the admirable patience with which he bore his detention for two days and

a night, gave provoking proofs; of the second, we had sufficient evidence also. After many entreaties and supplications, he at last consented to depart. The very next morning, however, necessity, according to his judgment, again compelled him to drop his anchor at Nettuno, near the ancient Antium: here my patience being exhausted, I bade adieu to my disagreeable company, and felt as grateful as Horace to the goddess who presides over Antium, for having procured me a good breakfast, a horse, and a little boy as a guide. Thus provided, I set out across the country for Albano, a distance of about twenty-seven miles. Our route lay through one continued straggling forest, very sandy, and only inhabited by some wild cattle. There was something not uninteresting in this solitude; but it had its inconveniences, for if robbers had been at hand and so disposed, my perfidious young guide would, I believe, have surrendered me, without hesitation, into their hands, and joined in the pillage. Indeed, he managed, without assistance, to pilfer me to a trifling amount; for seeing the unfortunate

little fellow toiling under a burning sun, to keep pace with my horse, I, out of compassion, allowed him to mount for a short distance, to rest himself, while I walked; but soon discovering that I was a much worse pedestrian than my juvenile guide, I permitted him, for mutual accommodation to sit behind me on the crupper, an action I was the more inclined to, as I recollected that Ariosto's heroes frequently thus relieved a dismounted cavalier, whom they met by accident in a forest. But nothing so true as the proverb, that idleness is the mother of vice; for my guide, now my follower, having nothing more to do with head, feet, or hands, by way of a return for my civility, I presume, amused himself by picking my pockets; and during our short ride, contrived to relieve me of a silk pocket handkerchief and some other trifles. I, indeed, recollected afterwards, on missing my property, that I had complained of his disturbing my coat, but his ready excuse lulled all my suspicions of his probity,—that he was trying to make my seat easier; and this he certainly did effect, but it was at my expense.

Albano, I found, offered so few objects of interest to the traveller, that I almost immediately left it, and went on to Rome, having neither the extensive erudition, nor the talent for minute antiquarian research, which Sir W. Gell has lately employed on these famous localities.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CAPITOL.

The Catacombs of St. Sebastian—A place of refuge for the early Christians—Persecutions of the emperors—Gibbon's opinions with respect to the martyrs considered—A view from the Pincian, a lively spectacle no where else to be seen—Amusement and devotion combined—The Borghese villa, a delightful combination of art and nature—Its resemblance to Ariosto's fairy scenes.

"Along the sacred way,
Hither the triumph came, and winding round
With acclamation, and the martial clang
Of instruments, and cars laden with spoil,
Stopt at the sacred stair that then appeared,
Then through the darkness broke ample star-bright,
As though it led to heaven. 'Twas night, but now
A thousand torches, turning night to day,
Blazed, and the victor, springing from his seat,
Went up, and kneeling as in fervent prayer,
Entered the Capitol." ROGERS.

HERE, where golden temples were erected to the Gods; here, where the spoils of nations were trea-

sured up; here, where Rienzi planted for a moment the flag of liberty—are now only to be seen a museum, a mock senate-house, and a few humble friaries, whilst the noble flight of steps which once conducted the triumphant victor, flushed with conquest, to hang up his trophies to the Gods, are now rarely ascended save by bare-footed monks, telling their rosaries.

After pondering over the scenes where Pagan rites were celebrated with a magnificence now unknown in worship, the traveller may turn and compare with the accounts we have of the gilded halls of Jupiter Capitolinus, the dark and gloomy recesses where our earliest Christian altars were erected.

Whoever, therefore, has perused Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, a work which displays so faithful a history of the early followers of Christ; whoever, still more deeply read, is conversant with the legends to be found in the pious chronicles of the middle ages; but above all, whoever is a sincere believer in the heroic actions, the name of which tradition and these early records have transmitted to us, let him

turn with reverence and admiration to the memory of the early Christian champions, and whilst he visits the catacombs of St. Sebastian, picture to himself all that has been done and suffered for his faith in by-gone ages. What singular reflections arise in the mind of the traveller, when his guide, with a small lantern in his hand, bids him pick his steps cautiously over the loose stones that conduct to these damp recesses, and informs him that he will soon behold the spot where some of the earliest Christian sacrifices were offered! There are still three different openings into these subterranean vaults, which anciently extended, it is said, for twenty miles; but at the present time, from the falling in of the earth, and other causes, their extent has been wonderfully diminished; and these caverns, which used formerly to be spoken of after the famous catacombs of Thebes, are now of limited size. The traveller, it is true, may advance farther than the parts commonly shown, but the insecure nature of the vaulted roofs, the devious character of the passages in which he finds himself involved, and the absence of a guide to extricate him from the labyrinth, are obstacles

that generally suffice to deter the adventurer from yielding to the desire he may feel to penetrate farther; it is said, indeed, that many lives have been sacrificed to such temerity.

And these, the traveller exclaims, when fairly immured among the chilly passages, whose gloom and dampness make him shudder, these are the dens in which the primitive Christians sought an asylum from the persecutions that raged, with little intermission, during the four first centuries! These dreadful persecutions began, as history records, under the inhuman Nero, who, it is well known, made the unoffending Christians the scape-goats of his cruelty. It was under this first scourge, that the two princes of the apostles suffered martyrdom. In this place, their ashes were first deposited, by their disciples; and here they reposed, till they found a more glorious resting-place in St. Peter's. How many must have shut themselves up in these hiding places, from the cheerful light of day, during the persecutions of the same description carried on by Domitian! The otherwise mild Trajan, too, aided in peopling these dismal cemeteries; but all

the sufferers here collected, during the course of these reigns, were few in comparison with the numbers, that were compelled to take refuge in this gloomy dwelling, during the reign of the sanguinary Diocletian. It is related of another emperor, by St. Gregory of Tours, that having received information of an immense crowd of Christians having entered the catacombs to pay their respects to the ashes of the martyrs there deposited, he ordered a wall to be erected at the entrance, and secured with a mound of sand, and thus entombed the whole alive,—so many were the victims,—such were the atrocities of the Roman emperors.

I am aware that Gibbon endeavours to palliate the conduct of the Roman rulers, on the plea that the Christians were regarded as the enemies of the State, and as profane contemners of the Roman Gods. He would have us believe too, that the number of victims was grossly exaggerated. But this celebrated historian shows himself so constantly the depreciator of Christianity, and the contemner of its followers; and so invariably a panegyrist of the Pagans, that the statements in his writings, which

might with propriety be styled an apology for infidelity, should be received with especial reserve, when at variance with authority equally learned, and as respectable as his own.

Others have attempted to doubt whether these catacombs were ever a place of refuge for the Christians; but the pictures from the Old and New Testament that have been discovered in the tombs; the hatchet, pincers, and other instruments of torture found enclosed with the dead, leave no doubt, if testimony were wanting, of the purposes to which these places were devoted.

In these catacombs, then, we may suppose, the early Christians, at the still hour of night, when their fell masters were plunged in wild debauchery, or sunk in indolent repose, seizing the auspicious moment to solemnize the rites of their religion, to collect with pious care the ashes of their brethren, and still to cherish the bonds of fraternal love, under the iron hand of oppression, whose weight only served to rivet the links the closer. The catacombs are about four feet wide, and seven feet high; there are generally three tiers of cells

placed lengthwise, one above another along the galleries. Pagans as well as Christians, from the second century, were buried here. Some fragments of human bones are even now to be found; but none, as may be imagined, can be authenticated as having belonged to any individual in particular. Those that could be so authenticated, have been, long since, removed to the Roman churches; the rest have mingled with their mother earth.

One of the most diversified and lively spectacles perhaps, which this world presents, is to be enjoyed on a Sunday evening from the top of the Pincian Hill. To say nothing of the very fine panoramic view of Rome and its singular environs,—the various churches with their elevated spires,—the immense palace of the Pope in the distance,—the intervening lesser domes that look like satellites round the great Pantheon,—and the ball and glittering cross of St. Peter's crowning all,—to say nothing of such a prospect, which will delight, if art, and nature, and recollections of the past can do so, I defy the most frigid imagination not to

feel interested in the lively scene that is passing below in the Piazza del Populo, rife as it is with mingled pomp and gaiety.

The hour of Vespers has arrived,—the hour of prayer, and eke of recreation for the awakened Roman. The beautiful area of the Piazza now embraces in its circle what no other capital can exhibit in so small a space. Whatever fault the serious Christian may find with the indecorous association of dissimilar objects that present themselves, the lover of novelty will not here complain of any want of variety, or subject of entertainment. Carriages innumerable, from which glance hundreds of bright eyes;—equestrians as many, whose principal occupation appears to be that of following these lights, not always lights from heaven;—pedestrians in crowds, exchanging passing glances with the many soft looks which stream to earth from the crowded upper windows;—then come Cardinals with their pompous liveries mingling with the higher classes, and here and there interspersed, picturesque groups of the Roman peasants in their fantastic holiday attire, each

assembled, as it seems, to say a thousand gay nothings, in their respective circles.

It is not, however, a stationary assembly; all is motion, all is change incessant; the lively natives in their progress, do not imitate the sober gravity of the serious English, during an afternoon parade in Hyde Park: parties every moment, as if stung by some sudden freak, drive out impetuously to the suburbs, and as many gay equipages instantly supply their place. The gate of the People, and the Corso are eternally sending forth or receiving back these restless flights, that glance along like the gay insects of summer.—Now all is mirth and enjoyment,—again a universal silence momentarily prevails; in the midst of the gaiety the tinkling of a bell announces the arrival of a procession bearing the host. The instant this, with its decorous files, has come up, all, without distinction of rank or station, are in a moment on their knees, from the poor Contadina, who chooses indifferently whatever spot she may be in for her genuflexion, to the high and imposing dama, who bends forward, with as much apparent reverence, in

her carriage;—but the moment before, the fair creature was listening with interest, to the soft homage of her admirers; in the next, as if stung by the worm of conscience, or inspired by a sudden though transitory fit of devotion, she turns her penitent looks to the sacred object elevated for her adoration.

I will not pretend to deny but that many Italians, of excitable feelings, educated in the midst of such an extraordinary amalgamation of devotion and amusement, as is seen at Rome, may feel their piety warmed by the frequent exhibitions of a religious character, which are presented to them at all times and under all circumstances; but I greatly fear that the vast majority are not generally in that frame of mind, nor under the influence of those feelings which are appealed to by a solemn religious procession, and that by this protrusion of things sacred upon the gaze of the public at ill-chosen seasons, the clergy only detract from that reverence which such holy objects are so justly entitled to receive from all serious Catholics. The outward manifestation of

the religious sentiments is probably generally best confined to the established places of public worship, or to the privacy of the closet; in the present constitution of society, it does not seem as if true religion could be promoted by being paraded about the streets, exposed perhaps to the derision of the profane, or the idle gaze of the unthinking.

Resuming my ramble upon the Pincian Hill, I met some interesting family parties taking their agreeable recreation; here and there, in the more retired parts of the walk, some ancient dowager followed by her footman, or the red-stocking Cardinals promenading with much state. Are these dignitaries still the enlightened patrons of learning, like those who flourished in the sixteenth century, and shed such lustre on the reign of the Leos and the Clements? I am afraid the race of the Bembos exists no more, at least in letters, though the present hierarchy of Rome are on the other hand much superior to their predecessors in their religious and clerical character.

Perceiving beneath me the extensive pleasure-

grounds of the villa Borghese, I bent my course leisurely in that direction, where, far otherwise than in exclusive England, all the world may amuse themselves with the sight of objects in which art and nature seem harmoniously combined for the general gratification. Agreeable and shady walks,—beautiful fountains,—an exquisite temple to Æsculapius,—gardens in high order,—a coup d'œil over which the unsated eye revels with pleasure, and rests in fine upon the glittering villa, in the interior of which, statuary vies with her rival sister—these are a few of the many objects which this extensive pleasure-ground displays. I was reminded, in contemplating such a combination of art and nature, of some of the fairy scenes described by Ariosto; and could have half-persuaded myself, (so charmed was I with what I saw,) that I had taken a trip with Astolpho in the air, and been transported to that enchanting island, where, amid umbrageous walks, surrounding a shining palace, St. John and the prophet Elijah passed their time so pleasantly.

CHAPTER XVII.

Music among the Romans—Encouraged by the Church during the middle ages—Modern Music—Its Cultivators—Rise of the Opera at Rome—Apostolo Zeno—Metastasio—His beauties—His defects—Lord Chesterfield's opinion of the Opera—How much we are indebted to Italy for the Opera.

As music was no where more encouraged than at Rome, as some of the earliest operas were enacted at the College of the Jesuits in that city, but particularly as Rome gave birth to the chief ornament of the opera, Metastasio, the short notice of this subject that follows, will not, I trust, be considered as misplaced.—

" Eve of the land which still is paradise!
Italian beauty! didst thou not inspire
Thy sons of song—each one a name that vies
With all we know of heaven or can desire,
In what they have bequeath'd us?—in what guise,
Though flashing from the fervour of the lyre,

Can words describe thy past and present glow,
While yet *Rossini* can create below?"

THE OPERA.

This delightful entertainment is, as it were, indigenous to the harmonious soil of Italy. Even at a period anterior to the glory of Rome, music, introduced by Pythagoras, the discoverer of the seven musical notes, into Magna Græcia, was in a flourishing state. It never was, however, in great estimation, as an art, among the ancient Romans; these proud warriors, considering this science of the Sybarites as an accomplishment worthy only of the attention of their slaves; and, after Nero, music was even considered infamous. It was consequently at a very low ebb till employed by the early Christians in the service of the church; the vocal part of the art being, however, the only one that was encouraged. St. Gregory, in the sixth century, tried to introduce the Greek music; and at a later epoch, Guido of Arezzo discovered counterpoint, and the science of harmony [1].

[1] Burney, in his History of Music, seems inclined to doubt the title of Guido to this discovery; the learned doctor appears rather disposed to

All this time melody was utterly neglected, and it was only when Palestrina at length arose, the creator of modern church music, that the art can be said to have acquired a form and fair proportions. Once encouraged, as it now was, by the affluent hierarchy, it made very rapid progress, and before long The OPERA was imagined. Dramatic music, however, did not arise complete, like Minerva ready armed from the head of Jupiter, but, like other arts, required long time to arrive at anything like perfection. Dafne was the name of the first rude essay that was offered to the public, the airs having been composed by two musicians of the names of Peri and Caccini. But this species of performance probably never had any real success, and had degenerated into mere pantomime about the earlier part of the seventeenth century. In this state of degradation it long continued, and was only at length reclaimed by Alessandro Scarlatti towards the end of the same cen-

sanction by his authority the superior claims of the Netherlands and Germany over Italy, to the above-mentioned, and some other musical discoveries—adhuc sub judice lis est.

tury, from the unworthy state into which it had fallen; he, by introducing, in 1693, the recitativo obligato, and the da capo, invested opera with a regularity and dignity to which it had before been a stranger. Vinci and Leo in Italy, and Hasse in Germany, were emulously employed, about half a century later, in setting the operas of Metastasio to music.

Almost contemporary with them arose the Raphael of music, Pergolesi, whose "Serva padrona," and "Stabat mater," have obtained for him enduring and well-deserved fame. Pergolesi seems, like so many other musical geniuses, to have had no control over his passions; his breast was at one time, overwhelmed with love; at another, equally overcome with devotion and remorse. Under the influence of the latter of these different orders of feelings, he composed his "Salve Regina;" but he died, like Raphael, a premature victim to the indulgence of the former and less nobler passion.

To Pergolesi succeeded, like so many satellites, Jomelli, the author of the "Miserere;" Piccini, the Rossini of his day, and Sacchini, till we arrive

at a star of the first magnitude, Cimarosa, "the God of the comic opera." So great was the genius, so perfect the taste of this immortal composer, that he put Europe into a musical delirium; and it is related of the Emperor Joseph the Second, that having heard Cimarosa's famous "Il Matrimonio Segreto," he treated all the performers to a supper, and then made them repeat the opera from beginning to end. Paesiello also excelled in the comic style, and proved himself a not unworthy successor to Cimarosa; in his "Barbiere di Seviglia," he even anticipated the brilliant career of Rossini. The other most distinguished composers of Italy who preceded this last, her present presiding divinity, were Sarti, Ferdinand Paer, born at Parma in 1724, whose chef d'œuvres are "Griselda" and "Agnese;" and Mayer, a Venetian by adoption, the author of the celebrated opera, "Il Fanatico per la Musica."

The poetry of the opera kept pace with the progress of musical science. Apostolo Zeno, though justly charged with effeminacy and frigidity, transferred much of the elegance and refine-

ment of French tragedy to his compositions, contributing in an equal degree with the harmonious Pergolesi, to banish rudeness and irregularity from the opera, and unquestionably leading the way to the delightful compositions of the tender Metastasio.

This great genius was born in Rome in 1698. His father followed the humble calling of a huckster in that city. It was while sitting in his father's booth that this favoured child of Nature attracted the notice of the celebrated lawyer and critic Gravina, by the melody of his voice. This learned man immediately took the boy into his service, educated him, adopted him, and left him a handsome legacy at his death.

However flattering to the youthful poet the success of his earliest offerings to the Muses, prudence suggesting the extreme fickleness of their smiles, determined him to embrace a more certain means of obtaining a livelihood. Accordingly, fortified by this excellent resolution, he put himself under the professional guidance of Castagna, a celebrated lawyer at Naples. But the genial sky of Naples, the encouragement which the poetry

he composed, without the knowledge of his austere master, received at court, the charms of a beautiful actress, and the fire of genius, all conspiring, impelled him irresistibly to escape from the dry trammels of the law, and to surrender himself entirely to the enchanting pursuits, which were his vocation by right of birth.

His rising fame at Naples did not prevent him from following to Vienna, in the chains of the fair songstress alluded to, who had now become completely mistress of his affections; and it would appear probable that it was under the very attractive tuition of this lady that the poet acquired much of that sweet lore which he was so soon to unfold to the world. Whether he derived from experience all the mysteries of the affections with which he proves himself so conversant, or not, we have no means of judging; but we know that his own love was sincere and lasting, and terminated only with the life of the lady.

It was while reaping a golden harvest at Vienna, that Metastasio subjected himself to the charge of sycophancy, fixed on him by Alfieri, who, happen-

ing to witness the cringing manner in which our poet prostrated himself before the Emperor, declared that he did not desire the acquaintance of such a man, if in such an act a man could be recognised. It would certainly appear that no alarmed Roman supplicant ever lost his self-possession so completely in the presence of Jupiter the Thunderer, as did Metastasio, when making his obeisance before the throne of the Austrian Cæsar. Under the smiles of this imperial patron, however, the rest of his days flowed smoothly, crowned with affluence and glory.

The beauties of Metastasio are so generally appreciated that it would be a useless task to expatiate on them. It has been objected by the severer critics, that he was too fond of indulging in conceits, and effeminacy of sentiment; and guilty of poetical incongruity, in putting sentimental language into the mouths of such hardy soldiers as Adrian, Titus, and Achilles. To meet this last reproach, besides insisting upon a certain latitude for the opera, a further exculpation might be found, in reflecting that these heroes were but men; and if we are to

judge from the histories of such worthies as Julius Cæsar, Pompey, Sylla, &c. however indomitable in war, they all felt the full power of the queen of smiles, and yielded themselves her captives. Nay, even the stern Cato the elder, though censorious on others, abandoned himself, as Plutarch informs us, to an indiscreet passion in his old age; so that, although we cannot say whether they sighed in our modern sentimental vein or not, yet they all bowed with discretion to the authority of the winged god, and thus as mere men may in some degree be assumed as bearing out Metastasio in the propriety of the language he has put into their mouths.

With regard to the other objections, we would recommend any cold critic, before pronouncing final sentence, to get inspired with the tender passion himself, and then to peruse Metastasio. Indeed, we hold this to be a preliminary indispensable to the right appreciation, to the capacity to see one-half the beauties of our poet; love being the burden and true interpreter of his song. Under such influence, the youthful reader will see re-

flected as in a mirror the various tender, yet glowing emotions with which the poet of love is inspired.

The difference between Matastasio and other poets is sufficiently striking. Other great poets have taken a master-grasp of the subject, love; choosing, generally, a single strong light in which to represent it. Metastasio traces the passion under every form; and exhibits it in every guise it can assume; the nicest shades and distinctions of the passion are passed before us in review—the jealousies and pangs, the quarrels and the reconciliations of lovers, are all touched with the skill of a Prospero. Many bards have analyzed the feelings and emotions which love engenders, like philosophers: Metastasio describes these, and exhibits them in action, like a man who himself had felt them. In the serious drama generally we have an overwhelming passion, with little change or intermission, leading to a painful conclusion: in Metastasio, after much tender woe, after a world of love storms, we always meet with sunshine and happiness at length.

The most famous productions of Metastasio, his Titus, his Themistocles, his Adrian, his Artaxerxes, his Cyrus, exhibit various opposing passions; love is contrasted with loyalty in a subject, with magnanimity in a prince; mercy again, is exhibited triumphant in Titus, magnanimity in Adrian and Artaxerxes. These contending emotions, like contrasts of colour in a picture, afford mutual relief, display new points of view, and give rise to striking and interesting situations. In the works of others our bosoms are too frequently wrung by the bitterness of the passion of love, or our merriment is only excited by its gay, and often heartless display in comedy: in Metastasio, our breasts fluctuate gently under the more tender, and often the better feelings of our nature; the generous sentiments uttered, being in harmony with the heroic sacrifices depicted; all which, supported by never-failing invention, perpetually renewed incident, and ingenious yet simple construction of plot, whilst the language flows on in one uninterrupted stream of elegance and harmony, enables the author most fully to attain his object, namely, to charm the mature

reader by the pleasures of recollection, and advance to melt the youthful lover, and flatter him for his nobly purposed self-denials.

Other nations may exhibit superior claims to excellence in science, as well as in the two principal divisions of the drama; but the OPERA belongs to Italy alone. That charming land, that favoured spot of earth, after reviving the slumbering sparks of learning, concluded her bounty, by combining the three delightful gifts of God to man, poetry, music, and painting, into one enchanting whole—the Opera. Under the guiding genius of her Pergolesis, Cimarosas, and Paesiellos, she has taught other nations, in their Handels, Glücks, Mozarts, Arnes, and Webers, to emulate, and sometimes to surpass her in the science of harmony and composition; but, jealous of her early reputation, she has still retained her supremacy, by denying the same united melody of voice, and power of giving pantomimic expression to the passions, to any but her own children.

Lord Chesterfield is related to have said to a friend, that whenever he went to the Opera, he

left his reason along with his hat, to the care of the door-keeper, and gave himself up to his sense of hearing. Surely this is a very limited view to take of this charming amusement. Who that is sensible to the concord of sweet sounds, or that boasts one spark of the fire divine that dwells in poetry, but must have felt every emotion of his soul in turn affected, and his imagination set on fire, whilst listening to the happy combination of sound with sense, of 'soft airs married to immortal verse,' to be met with in many of our celebrated Operas. If it be true, as has been remarked, that we can express but partially, in language, the eternally changing emotions of the mind, and that the poet has half his hidden beauties unfolded by the expression of the well-graced actor, how much more does this remark apply, when words become significant through the medium of music, the science of painting in sound, as it has been poetically termed! While absorbed in this world of melodious meaning, in which all the passions, in their dissimilarity, not only find a tongue, but in which the minutest shades of each are most readily expressed; in which their

sudden transitions, or gentle subsidings into each other, are so happily conveyed; in which love, with all its changes, gently melts us; in which rage, with its loud and harsh, or discordant and half-smothered tones appals; in which madness now whines in piteous helplessness, now storms with demoniac fury, in which pity dissolves, and jealousy wrings us;—who that is capable of

> "Untwisting all the chains that tie,
> The hidden soul of harmony,"

and of feeling the various emotions of his mind appealed to in succession, whilst his eye is captivated by the fascinations of painting, and the charms of female beauty, but must in this temporary oblivion of the dull realities of life, feel deep gratitude to that interesting country to which he is indebted for so much of the refinement, and so many of the pleasures of existence?

CHAPTER XVIII.

Leaves Rome—The Campania—Baccano—Ronciglione—Sienna—St. Catharine of Sienna—The Siennese beauty—The jealous husband—Italian female education—The national female character.

TURNING our backs upon Rome, we began to traverse the dreary Flaminian way, where the slight vestiges of cultivation perceptible, and the silence and almost the solitude of the desert that surround him, prepare the traveller, who enters Rome on this side, for the desolation he is about to encounter in so many quarters of the Eternal City.

Nothing occurred to interrupt the sombre reflections in which the party with whom I travelled were absorbed, till the smoke curling agreeably

upwards from the small inn of Baccano, attracted the eyes of all, and aroused speculations on the probabilities which this appearance held out, of our finding something comfortable in the shape of refreshment, which every one seemed to contemplate with satisfaction, were it but for the sake of interrupting the monotony of the journey. These very rational speculations were at last realized, but not exactly in the manner, nor to the extent which had been anticipated, for our expectations, as often happens, proved, in the present instance, to our sorrowful experience, to have far outstripped the capacities of the larder and kitchen of the inn at Baccano. At the expiration of a short half Italian hour,—that is to say, sixty good English minutes,—bad eggs, bad meat, and bad bread, without the very homely accompaniment of butter, formed the items of the exquisite repast which we had beheld in long perspective, as we toiled through the Roman desert. It was, perhaps, fortunate that there was nothing really worthy of observation on the remainder of our route; for, poor mortals that we are, no charms,

not even those of love, look pleasing in the eyes of hungry men.

The small town, which formed our resting-place through the first night of our journey, had but one advantage that I could perceive,—namely, that of being situated on a very high hill, in consequence of which elevation it enjoyed a good view of the vale beneath and country around. We found nothing to interest us in the dirt of the houses, nor in the squalid appearance of the inhabitants; indeed, we exchanged very unfriendly looks with more than one of them;—there was certainly a sufficiency of malevolence in the general expression of their countenances; probably, there is a turn for satire among them,—at least, I can aver that we were all woefully backbitten during the night. These surmises of ours were confirmed, in some degree, by our observing an Italian Count, not of the nicest appearance himself, carrying with him his bed and *paraphernalia*, he preferring, no doubt, to undergo a night attack from his habitual friends rather than from mere strangers. Between this town and

Sienna our journey was both peaceable and uninteresting.

Sienna is remarkable for three things—its fine air, the purity of its tuscan, and its pretty women. The cathedral is a fine old Gothic pile, reminding us, by its pictures, of Pius II., and the famous St. Catherine of Sienna;—her marriage ring, her correspondence with Popes and doctors, and her revelations, have rendered this learned female saint very celebrated.

The Siennese, during the palmy state of their republic, were of the Ghibelline faction; they obtained a famous victory over the Florentines, near Arbia; but after undergoing various internal changes themselves, and many reverses of fortune, they fell finally under the sway of Philip the Second, who handed them over to the rule of Cosmo I. in 1557. Several councils were held at Sienna, at one of which the election of the Pope was fixed in the conclave of Cardinals. Besides Pius II., Sienna can boast of having given birth to such celebrated men as Gregory VII., Alexander III., Socinus, and Mascagni.

From this city I travelled in company, for a few days, with a very pretty Siennese young lady, who had not been long married to an inhabitant of Switzerland, with whom she was now proceeding to that country. I was very much pleased with the captivating manners of the Siennese beauty; and what gave an additional charm to her soft eyes and speaking countenance, was, that they were accompanied with much natural intelligence, combined with considerable mental cultivation. The music of Tasso and Metastasio, authors with whom she appeared to be perfectly familiar, flowed with double sweetness from her lips; and she told some anecdotes with that naïveté and natural grace peculiar to her country-women. If there was any thing tender in what she said, there was a languishing softness in her expression which argued her no stranger to the gentler emotions of the mind; at the same time, if any thing called for stronger feelings, her dark eye bespoke her capable, if roused, of stronger passions. But with us strangers she was, of course, as smiling and tranquil as a summer's lake.

The most amusing thing was, that the husband appeared preposterously jealous. Every smile she gave to a fellow-traveller he considered given at his expense, and very unjustly; for though

"Bright as the sun her eyes the gazers strike,
Yet, like the sun, they shone on all alike."

Her husband saw not with an observer's eye;—had he been a well-bred Italian, he would never have been guilty of the absurdities he committed. Whenever he alighted to mount an acclivity, he cast many a wistful look after his cara sposa in the carriage; till at last, whether it was that no pains were taken by the party to spare him, or that he thought, in truth, he was receiving too little of the attentions of the lady, whenever he left the vehicle, he insisted on her accompanying him to enjoy the pleasure of a conjugal lecture. It was well he was leaving Italy, or he himself might have been the cause of the fair one's giving him more than "trifles light as air," for his suspicions.

This young lady presented rather a favourable specimen of Italian female intelligence, the edu-

cation of the women being often neglected. At a very early age the daughters of all the better houses are sent into convents, that they may be out of the way, and be felt as no check upon the mother, who is completely engrossed in the pursuit of pleasure, instead of being occupied, in what should be her peculiar duty, the education, moral and intellectual, of her daughters. From the convent the young prisoner frequently only goes forth to be given away in a marriage, contracted by her family, and for family reasons, to some individual, often an utter stranger to her, and of course almost invariably an object of the most perfect indifference. No wonder then, that where the heart is so little engaged, it should so soon be transferred to the more acceptable attendant.

Devotion, and the attention necessary to acquire some trifling accomplishments, form the staple business of the convent. From such an education, probably, arises that singular amalgamation of love and devotion which appear so inseparably interwoven, that they seem to constitute the very essence of the existence of an Italian female,

who will turn from kissing the picture of some favourite saint, to bestow a similar proof of her affection on an admiring lover.

CHAPTER XIX.

BOLOGNA.

The First and Second Universities—Their Founders—The School of Painting—The Carracci and their Pupils—The former celebrity of the Italian Universities—Progress of the Sciences in Italy—The late Revolution at Bologna—Causes of its failure—Forms of government suited to Italy—The prospects of Italy.

Bologna La Grassa was certainly a noble gift of the Princess Matilda to the Popes, in whose hands, under a legate and nominal senate, with only short intervals of transferred allegiance, it has remained ever since. To this enlightened princess Bologna owes its first university, which once boasted above 8000 students, and not only educated the children of her own soil, but attracted scholars, like the sister university, Padua, from all parts of Europe.

Bologna may with reason be proud of such names as those of Cassini, Morgagni, Malpighi, and that soldier and philosopher Marsigli, who, by presenting a noble collection of the instruments of science, became the founder of the present university, which is rich in objects of natural history, and celebrated especially for its medical school.

Bologna is equally famous for her school of painting, which was founded by Lodovico Carracci, surnamed the Ox, on account of his slowness. Among the more illustrious pupils of the Bolognese school may be mentioned Agostino and Annibale Carracci, the cousins of the founder. Agostino, like the ancient painter who deceived the birds, is said to have deceived a horse by his successful painting of that animal. Annibale has immortalized himself by his admirable works in the Farnese palace, in which the labours of Hercules are represented. From the school of Bologna also emanated Domenichino, whose Saint Jerome in the Vatican is generally held second in merit to the Transfiguration of Raphael alone. Among the other distinguished pupils of the same school are

enumerated Albano, the Anacreon of painting, whose Venuses, Sporting Cupids, and Groups of Children, display such variety of grace; the sweet Guido, whose youthful Heads, Aurora, and Goliah, are scarcely to be surpassed in the field of modern art; lastly, Guercino, who aimed at uniting the sweetness of Guido with the strong manner of Carravagio. The aim of the Bolognese painters was to unite the excellences of all the different schools,—a design in which they were pretty successful, although the object does not seem to have been a legitimate one, at least if we may conclude so much from the after-influence which this system had on the art of painting; for it declined rapidly after the removal from the scene of the great men whom we have just mentioned. They themselves, indeed, often pushed expression to the verge of extravagance, and seem seldom to have thought they had attained their end if they stopped short of the point at which positive pain is inflicted. The tragedy queen of the theatre begins to appear in the Matres Dolorosæ of the Bolognese school, and the muse of painting is too frequently exhibited

tricked out with tinsel, and bedizened with pastes, instead of appearing in the simple flowing robe and diamond of the purest water, which are her only ornaments in the works of the earlier masters.

As the Italian universities once enjoyed extensive celebrity,—Padua for civil law, Salerno for medicine, Pisa and Florence for natural philosophy, and Bologna for canon law and the natural sciences, no degree having been held in higher estimation than that of a Bolognese doctor in law,—we will pause here for a moment, and cast a glance around us on the more eminent of the cultivators of science in Italy. An erroneous opinion has long prevailed among those who are but imperfectly acquainted with the history of Italian literature,—who constitute, it must be presumed, a large class of general readers,—that Italy was chiefly distinguished, in the sixteenth century, for her successful cultivation of the fine arts and of poetry. It is by no means uncommon to find individuals otherwise well-informed, maintaining, by inference at least, that here the glory of Italy terminated, and that whoever would investigate the history of the

sciences, must look among other nations for the traces of their astonishing progress from the time of Bacon down to the present day.

To remove these erroneous impressions, it is enough to take the most hasty survey of the various departments of knowledge in their progressive improvement, and to become aware of all that Italian genius has achieved, in raising almost every one of them to the point of excellence which has now been attained.

To begin with the natural sciences, as probably most redounding to the glory of inventors, and the ultimate progress of society, we shall find, that Italy has contributed in even more than her fair proportion to their advancement. Indeed, did we not call to mind the patronage which the rulers of her numerous petty states so frequently bestowed on men of scientific acquirements, we should certainly be filled with wonder to find Italians the authors of so many brilliant discoveries, the founders, in fact, of so many of the physical sciences.

In medicine, and particularly in its most important branch, anatomy, when contrasted with

any other nation, Italy must be allowed to hold the first rank, and to have pointed out the path to almost all that has been accomplished in this very interesting department of knowledge since the revival of letters. Almost every region of the body is, as it were, indelibly stamped with the name of some illustrious Italian discoverer. Columbus, Fallopius, Fabricius, Eustachius, Ingrassias, Aselli, Malpighi, Valsalva, Pacchioni, Borelli, Mascagni, and Spallanzani, are all distinguished names, the very fathers of anatomy. Nor is it only as discoverers in this useful and positive science that they have been famous; some of the chief systems of medicine have originated with them. Fallopius may be looked upon as the founder of comparative osteology; Fabricius of Aquapendente, by showing the valves of the veins, is entitled to share in the glory of the illustrious Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation. Aselli discovered the lacteal system. Malpighi first employed the microscope, that necessary instrument in minute anatomy, by means of which he investigated and displayed the true nature of glandular structures. Morgagni, in his invaluable

work on "the Seats and Causes of Diseases," though preceded by Bonnet, was the real founder of pathology, the prosecution of which, since his day, has caused medicine not only to appear, but actually to become a new science. Cæsalpinus, by tracing the internal organization of plants, may be considered as the forerunner of the great Linnæus in botanical science, and of all the illustrious vegetable physiologists who have flourished since the days of the distinguished Swede. Need we mention the names of the starry Galileo, who disputes the honour of inventing the telescope; of Cassini, who drew the first meridian; of Castelli, who explained the doctrine of running waters; of Torrecelli, the discoverer of atmospheric pressure, and the inventor of the barometer; of Borelli, who expounded the laws of muscular action, by those of mechanics; of Viviani and of Father Boscovich, so famous in mathematics and philosophy; of Sanctorius, the first to ascertain the amount of sensible and insensible perspiration? We probably do not find the same array of Italian names in connexion with the progress of chemical science, only because in

the days of Italian glory this had no proper existence; and yet the discovery of the phenomenon of galvanism, in the importance of the conclusions to which it has led, is almost glory enough for any nation: Galvani and Volta prepared the way for Davy, and furnished him with the powerful means by which he effected the decomposition of the alkalies, and changed the whole face of chemistry as a science.

Even in the political sciences, however adverse, despotism may be supposed to have been to their growth, we have already found the natives of this inventive country, represented by Machiavelli, in the very first place; in more recent times the truly illustrious name of Beccaria occurs, the originator of humanity in the administration of criminal law.

The Italians also claim the honour of having invented political economy, that science so essential to the proper investigation and the right understanding of the true interests of commonwealths. Antonio Serra, in his work published so long ago as the year 1613, on the productive powers of

industry, though mistaken in his views, laid the corner-stone of the structure, which has since been reared in such harmonious proportions by Adam Smith, but the materials for which were successively prepared by the countrymen of Serra, Bandini, Belloni, and Davanzante, all of whom appear to have been acquainted with most of the leading principles of political economy, as established at the present day; by Carli, who proved that the balance of commerce, of itself, showed nothing, and drew distinctions between the real and nominal value of money; by the Abbot Galliani, the witty author of the celebrated Dialogues on the Corn Trade, in which he shows that it should in the main be free, though carried on under particular restrictions; that labour is the sole creator of value, a doctrine which Smith advanced about the same time, probably, without being acquainted with the Italian's views; by Count Verri, who concluded more accurately than any other writer before Smith, in regard to many of the most important principles of the science, such as the injurious nature of monopolies, and of exclusive privileges vested in eccle-

siastical and other corporate bodies, whilst, as an inference from this, he is led to advocate the freedom of commerce generally, and the impolicy of governments interfering with the commercial relations of different states. In short, as Say very judiciously observes, if the Italian writers failed to establish political economy on its true foundations, in not having drawn proper conclusions from their premises, or in not always deriving effects from their causes, yet by the many discoveries they made, and the important truths they established, they must be held second in merit to Smith alone, the true founder at once and architect of the science.

In legislation, it were easy to dilate upon the claims of Italy to the highest consideration. Her merits in this science, among the most important of all to the happiness and well-being of society, is far from being duly appreciated; yet, Filangieri can be named as the worthy rival, as well as successor of Montesquieu. If the French author has successfully dedicated his powers to the investigation of the spirit of laws, and the secret springs

of different forms of government, Filangieri has developed, in a more scientific form, and with a more practical aim, the principles which should guide legislators in originating laws, and in finding remedies for the various causes of decay in commonwealths. The noble Beccaria too, whose name has been already mentioned incidentally, labouring in the genuine spirit of Christianity, and guided by true wisdom, has done more than any other modern, in banishing the barbarities of the feudal system, and the atrocities of the dark ages, from criminal legislation. It is sad to reflect that the enlightened philanthropy and incontrovertible reasonings of these distinguished men, should ever have had less influence in their own country than in any other division of modern Europe.

In this rapid glance at those who have advanced science in Italy, the author by no means intends to underrate the merits of its promoters in other nations: these he is ready to admit; he is perfectly aware too, that the practical bearing, and even the value to mankind at large, of the discoveries and improvements in the sciences achieved

by men of other lands in the course of the last and present century, have cast into shade the once great fame of Italy; still, he contends for her early merit in the sciences, claims for her the distinction of having led the way in most of them, and believes himself justified in ascribing solely to the political disadvantages under which that interesting country has so long laboured, her recent backwardness in the great race of European improvement: for Italy must be owned the first teacher of science in modern times, as she was without dispute the great European mistress in the fine arts, in polite literature, and in the civilization that attends them.

However much all lovers of liberty may admire the efforts which the Bolognese patriots made in the late revolution, to recover their independence; however a generous mind may sympathize with them, on their overthrow by the Austrians, still their sincere friends cannot help lamenting that they should have been so precipitate in their proceedings, as to venture on action before they had learned how far they might calculate on assistance

from abroad, or on co-operation from their country-men at large.

Were not this too serious a subject to jest with, the scenes presented at Bologna, during the short interval of her recovered freedom, might be exhibited in a sufficiently ludicrous light. In every street, enthusiastic young patriots were to be seen embracing one another, with tears of joy, for having shaken off their chains; in every coffee-house, a crowded circle of sapient politicians assembled, settling not only the nature of their future government, but canvassing the claims of each particular city to the honour of being elected the seat of empire of Italy united and independent. On both questions, as might have been expected, various were the opinions expressed: some were for a grand republic, or so many separate republics; others for an aggregate constitutional monarchy; and others again, for a kind of federal government. Naples seemed the fittest seat of the legislature to one, Bologna from its central situation to a second, and Rome, for its historic recollections, to a third. In the mean time, the Austrians stepped in to

settle these disputes with sharp arguments, and saved the Bolognese patriots the trouble of setting up a new government. The resistance made against this overwhelming power, was of very short duration; the fetters were again put upon the city, and the most active members of the *rebellion*, as it was termed of course, either sought safety in flight, or were thrown into the prisons of Bologna, preparatory to their transference to the furnaces, *su i piombi* of Venice, and the horrors of starvation for twenty years in the fortress of Spielberg.

There is no point on which the politicians of Italy are less agreed, than on the form of government best adapted to her present condition. The establishment of one great constitutional monarchy would certainly best secure the advantages of union and consolidation; but unless it should please Providence, in its wise bounty, to bestow the genius of a Frederick the Second on some future King of Naples, or of Sardinia, a dispensation that does not seem very probable, judging from the present growth of monarchs, which would enable him forcibly to unite the discordant elements of which Italy

is composed, and thus gain a rallying point against the power of Austria, the plan appears impracticable. As to a republic, the situation of surrounding kingdoms, the experience of the past, and the dissensions that constantly agitated the states thus constituted in former times, make this the most chimerical of all the ideas entertained for the settlement of Italy. The only constitution, therefore, that seems at all feasible, is one of a federative nature, and this, did circumstances permit its adoption, appears to be that which is pointed out by nature, as likely to suit best with the political divisions as well as the natural boundaries of Italy. The distinct states or kingdoms, into which she was partitioned, might be made, each independent in its domestic legislature, whilst all were united for common or international purposes. The stranger being expelled, Piedmont might amalgamate with Lombardy. Central Italy might fall under a constitutional government in Rome, and Naples might remain with its present boundaries, but put in possession of some form of representative constitution. The most enthusiastic in the cause of

liberty are the inhabitants of the Northern States; and a united kingdom bounded by the Alps, and stretching from the Gulf of Venice, to that of Genoa, supported along its southern boundary by faithful allies, having a community of interests, might find itself strong enough to resist Austria through all future times. The greater portion of the Papal States, particularly the more southern divisions, would probably be content with a less liberal form of government, than that which would be adapted for the kingdom of Lombardy. Whatever changes the Neapolitans might require, it would still be difficult, at first, to make them coalesce with the other two divisions, and make a united Italy; but this in time would be accomplished, and the advantages that would speedily accrue from the union, would before long make it indissoluble.

The causes which have led to the failure of all the recent revolutionary movements in Italy may be stated in few words, and consist in a want of understanding among the different states, the political ignorance of the people at large, the inexpe-

rience and intemperate enthusiasm of the young men of the better classes, the apathy of the rest, and the overwhelming power of Austria. Though it is generally easy to perceive the errors of the past, and to show wherein the cause of failure of great undertakings lay, it is another thing to point out the means which shall secure success for the future. Such chances and changes occasionally happen in states as confound the most careful calculations. Who a short time ago could have ventured to predict that Spain would in our day have a constitutional monarchy, as her form of government? Experience, however, should teach Italy, the necessity of remaining quiet in the mean time; she must and can expect no assistance from abroad at present. Her different states must cultivate union among themselves; sounder political notions must be by all means acquired, and her true patriots taught to look forward with hope, though the day may be distant, either for the separation of the Austrian States, (which if some writers are to be believed, are not held together by the strongest ties,) or some change in the form of government by which they

are ruled; the general diffusion of liberal opinions, and the firm settlement of the new constitutional governments, which would naturally look on Italy with a friendly eye, should any reasonable prospect of her emancipation arise, from concurring circumstances, will undoubtedly enable her yet to cast off her chains.

CHAPTER XX.

Modena—The Italian siesta—The Duke of Modena—His unpopularity—Parma—Maria Louisa—Greatly liked—Mild in her government—Her faults—Correggio and Parmegiano, the pride of Parma.

THE habit of taking the siesta, observed through Italy, and other countries of the south of Europe, conveys the idea of extreme indolence to the stranger; yet the practice, which has been handed down from remote antiquity, appears to be rendered in some sort necessary, by the extreme heat of the noon-tide hours, and it is even in accordance with the acknowledged laws of digestion. In the large capitals, the entire suspension of all business for a season, after the principal meal, cannot escape

remark; but in such a second or third rate town as Modena, the sudden disappearance of the inhabitants at the hour of noon, throws such a melancholy and deserted aspect over the place, that a traveller is inevitably seized with a sense of loneliness and isolation. The narrow streets, the long and heavy piazzas or arcades that run along them, and the intense heat of the meridian sun, reflected with double ardour from the white walls of the dwelling houses, render Modena at mid-day a veritable desert, as it then is one of the most sombre and disagreeable of cities to the stranger, who at this season is not happy in the embrace of Morpheus. In perambulating the whole town a little after mid-day, I saw no human being, except one or two lazy mendicants, crawling for shelter into the shade of some protecting porch. I entered a coffee-house, a single servant was the only person on the premises who was not asleep. I found it best, therefore to betake myself to my lodgings, and even to go to sleep, like the rest of the world of Modena. He who would shake off this infectious indolent humour, will find it a harder task than he imagines;

no frightened worm retreats more quickly into his shell, than he who exposes himself to the sun's meridian rays in Italy will find it necessary to return to the shelter of the house. But no one, save those who have experienced the fervour of this sunny clime can understand the luxury that follows with the evening of each sultry day,—the reviving freshness of the night, the enjoyment of the cooling sorbetto, or lemonade, the body stretched at ease, and the whole senses absorbed in the most exquisite sense of present existence; "the first sparkle of desert spring" cannot quicken the pilgrim of the waste in a higher measure, than a cup of iced water in the evening does him who passes the ordeal of an Italian summer's day.

Nothing can be more striking than the sudden change that comes over the face of things when the siesta is at an end; this is about four o'clock, and then, as if the whole hive had taken flight, bees and drones and all, the awakened citizens may be seen issuing from their houses, unbarring their windows, and renewing the business of the day; then too the little coffee-houses begin to swarm,

the daily haunts of a large proportion of the inhabitants of Italian towns, where, with sherbet, small talk, coffee, and domestic politics, they manage to keep the machine of being, clogged though it be in every tooth of every wheel by their rulers, from standing altogether still.

There is no petty sovereign of Italy more heartily disliked by his subjects than the Duke of Modena. A capricious and arbitrary exercise of authority, heavy taxation, and a harassing system of espionage, are the very sufficient causes of this unpopularity. Probably, this mean-souled ruler is thus endeavouring to re-establish himself in the good graces of Austria, for his former questionable conduct towards that state, in having organized, through the agency of a Mr. Misley, and the promised support of the French liberals, a revolutionary project, the end of which was to make himself monarch of Italy. His excuse, on the failure of this scheme, for betraying his associates, and even seeking the life of his prime agent, Misley, that he was himself betrayed by the French King to Metternich, is but a poor defence of his ungene-

rous and unworthy conduct; but this is not all: there is a mixture of vindictiveness and of refined selfishness in the mode in which he himself visits his own misdeeds in the eyes of his superiors, the Austrians, upon his unfortunate hereditary subjects.

The Archduchy of Parma, after being subject to many different masters, yielded at length to the victorious arms of the warlike pontiff, Julius II.; from whom it descended to Paul III., who gave the city and territories annexed, to his relatives, as an inheritance. The Duchy next succumbed to the house of Spain, and lastly, became attached to that of Austria, in the person of the reigning Archduchess, or Queen Maria Louisa. Under the mild government of this princess, Parma enjoys as much happiness as any of the minor Italian states. Her constant residence, with her little court around her, and the desire she evinces to encourage industry, according to the best of her judgment, deserve praise. She allows a municipal body to regulate the taxes; but the power of this assembly

is nearly nominal, every thing being finally under the authority of the prime minister. The greatest bars to industry and improvement arise from the impolitic and vexatious restrictions imposed on the freedom of commercial intercourse, by each of these different little states; in this, indeed, they do but ape the greater European powers; but the consequences to a limited population of a few hundreds of thousands are felt in an immeasurably greater degree than where millions are concerned. Maria Louisa is generally and deservedly in much better odour as a sovereign than the Modenese tyrant. She has always visited with milder penalties than any other Italian sovereign, the unfortunate patriots, who rose in the two last revolutions; giving them, in many instances, the choice between voluntary exile to a foreign country, and imprisonment at home. She has one failing, which seemed hereditary in the family with which she became connected, and which appears to exist among the collateral branches of her own house. It would surely have been becoming in the wife, now the widow of Napoleon,

to have played the part of Penelope; but this she has not done.

Parma may well boast of Correggio, the great master of light and shade, and perhaps the superior of the mighty Raphael himself, in depicting grace and corporeal feeling. His fresco of the Assumption, in the Cathedral, his Holy Family and fine picture of St. Jerome, are proudly pointed out to the stranger at Parma. There also may be seen a Holy Family, by his pupil Parmegiano, who was almost as distinguished as his master for grace.

As we are now in Lombardy, where Italian tragedy has been chiefly cultivated, where its most distinguished ornaments have arisen, and where the theatres have oftenest re-echoed to the mournful accents of the tragic muse, we shall find no place so suitable for giving a brief notice of the most distinguished Italian dramatists.

CHAPTER XXI.

Italian Tragedy—The revolting nature of the tragic representations of the Sixteenth Century—Refinement introduced by Maffei—Further improved by Alfieri—His Dramas—Monti—His noble Drama Aristodemo—His Political Inconsistencies—Pindemonte—Foscolo—His Failure in the Drama—A fine Poet and Critic—His Eccentricities—Manzoni banishes the Unities from the Stage—Silvio Pellico, a Dramatist of great tenderness—Francesca di Rimini, and his other Works.

" A nameless horror chills my faculties,
Whose unknown cause is far beyond the ken
Of scar'd imagination. Sorrow's hand
Blends her confusion o'er the dismal scene.
Night follows days,—in vain;—for present still
It harrows up my soul: before my eyes,
Or to my wakeful fancy when I doze,
Still frowns the hideous prospect. Now it seems
My faithful spouse is sever'd from my side,
And leaves me wandering thro' a boundless gloom.
And oft by day the melancholy walls

And figur'd marbles seem to blush with gore;
And often from the old imperial tombs,
Where sleep the consorts of Norwegian kings,
Rushes the giant spectre with a noise
As when Ægean stormed the walls of heaven,
And launched Olympus at the wondering stars.
He frights me from my couch, and points below
A drear asylum, gloomy and profound;
And, lest I should retreat, with menace loud
Secures the pass behind. It is not sleep,
But those tremendous forms that people night,
I dread." IL TORRISMONDO OF TASSO.

ITALIAN tragedy, like other branches of literature, has undergone many changes since its rise in the sixteenth century; indeed, like the different schools of painting, it can be divided into three epochs. The revival of letters gave renewed birth to the Tragic Muse; and as the storehouses of antiquity were just laid open, these naturally afforded the subjects upon which the dramatic poets of modern times first essayed their skill. All the terrors, with which the early Greek tragedy abounds, were reproduced, in the new theatre, but without the redeeming qualities and the refinement of Attic taste.

The interest of the Greek tragedies was over-

whelming; the early Italian drama, with a few exceptions, is now only revolting. The most noted of those that have come down to us—the Sofonisba of Trissino—the Rosmunda of Ruccellai—the Torrismondo of Tasso—the Orbecche of Cinthio—the Aripando of Decio da Horte, in which the mangled limbs of children are produced on the stage before the eyes of their mother—and the Canace of Sperone Speroni,—all offended against taste and propriety in different degrees; they are all too deeply dyed in horrors to be endurable,—murder, incest, &c. were the favourite themes selected for displaying to advantage the terrible aspect of the tragic muse. The three first names we have mentioned must be excepted from this general charge, as displaying considerable refinement; but those that followed, for a century afterwards, were of a thoroughly atrocious character; and it was only when Maffei at last appeared, that Italian tragedy began to lose its truculent nature. He, from his learning, refined taste, and admiration of the French dramatists, was the first who sought to transfer the elegance of Racine to the Italian

stage; it is almost needless to say, that this was not done without the accompaniment of all the most glaring defects of his model. Still the Merope of Maffei, a subject superiorly treated by his successor, was a step towards improvement; but the drama is disfigured by the long speeches, the frigid correctness, and real mediocrity of the school from which he copied.

To break the fetters, now imposed upon the serious drama, Vittorio Alfieri suddenly burst upon his countrymen, to forge chains, equally binding, it is true, but of another and less confining kind, and at least of original design.

Alfieri, imbued with a finer feeling for the spirit of the ancients, was the first of Italian dramatists to give passion its true expression. This innovation was hailed, with any thing but pleasure, by the old school; but true genius, and the unsophisticated language of passion, which he never scrupled to employ, soon made him the idolized favourite of his countrymen.

Of the character of this great poet, as a writer and a man, the materials bequeathed in his inte-

resting autobiography, furnish us with ample means of forming a true estimate. In both capacities, Alfieri was an original in the strictest sense of the word. By briefly recapitulating some of the more interesting points in Alfieri's biography, I trust I shall both gratify the reader, and give him the means of tracing some signs, if not of imitation, at least of great accidental resemblance, between the eccentricities of the Italian poet, and those that distinguished our own immortal Byron.

Count Victor Alfieri was born at Asti, in Piedmont, in 1749. The early death of his father left him under the care of a fond mother. A defective education, great irritability and inequality of temper, and a strong tendency to melancholy as he approached manhood, made him at one moment bury himself in solitude, in the next plunge headlong into dissipation. An intense passion for travelling also took possession of his mind, and this he gratified by such rapidity of movement as to defy calculation, often apparently caring little whither he went,

> "—— Provided he was arriving
> At the end of all travelling, which is driving."

He had also a strong partiality for the animal creation, particularly horses, to the prejudice, and for a long time to the utter exclusion from his affections of every individual of his own species; his temper was then as much affected by the changing humour of a favourite steed, as others generally are by that of a mistress. He possessed a rather pugnacious disposition too, which was supported by indomitable pride. His moral views were none of the strictest either; the wife of another was no sacred object in the sight of the bard, as his attachment to the Countess of Albany, during the life of the Pretender, her husband, attests. Should charity put in a plea here, by asserting that it is uncertain whether he did not afterwards give this singular lady claims on his affections, this will not cover his wanderings from the path of virtue, in eloping with an English Countess; nor will his courage in meeting her injured husband, in a duel, and his subsequent anxiety to share his fortunes with this lady, who was more to blame than the poet, till he found himself unworthily supplanted, prove any justification in the eye of morality for his conduct.

Alfieri was so ardent a lover of independence, that he was looked upon as a dangerous subject, and compelled to banish himself from his native soil. He seems occasionally to have been seized with fits of parsimony, which alternated with others of the most reckless profusion. His most distinguishing and permanent peculiarity, however, appears to have been his love of solitude, of silence, and even of darkness; the pleasure he took in listening, hid in a sombre nook of some old cathedral, to the solemn peals of the organ, was extreme. These and many other points of character, involuntarily bring to recollection the habits and peculiarities of our illustrious countryman, just mentioned.

As a writer, Alfieri stands infinitely higher than he does as a man, and fully merits all the fame he has acquired. The tales of his dramas are always simple; the interest is generally centred in a few characters, to the developement of which he gives his whole soul. In some instances he carries this concentration so far, as to come near the simplicity of the Greek tragedy. In his Mirrha, for exam-

ple, the whole plot of which lies in the guilty love of a daughter for a father, the poet, despite the apparent paucity of his materials, works out a tale of so much interest, and gives such force of depiction to the single absorbing subject, that the drama, without being revolting, never flags, and strongly reminds the classical reader of the almost monological Philoctetes of Sophocles.

The chief talent of Alfieri lay in the delineation of the passions, and in expressing, in burning accents, a glorious enthusiasm for liberty. In his most admired pieces,—his *Timoleon*, his *Mérope*, his *Brutus*, &c.—this peculiar bent of his genius is powerfully displayed. Yet, even in these, by trying to give too great fidelity to the ancient characters, and discarding all ornament, as out of place, there is a stiffness, a marble-like coldness, which is unpleasing; though the chisel may have been handled with sublime energy, the statue retains a hardness and rigidity of outline, more allied to the ruggedness of Michael Angelo than to the grace and softness of Canova.

If one of his works is to be valued above others,

perhaps the "Saule" may be entitled to the preference, where, interspersed with the noblest lyrical poetry, the jealousy of his power, and the deranged passion of the old monarch, are so forcibly depicted as to constitute it, a whole which might not be deemed unworthy of being placed on the same parallel with Lear.

The countrymen of Alfieri have often hailed his tragedies with acclamation; those passages particularly in which are breathed high aspirations after liberty, which would appear to form the "unreached paradise of their despair," are to be found in the mouths of all, and regularly secure for the actor an abundant tribute of applause.

The particulars Alfieri has given of his method of composition, are curious; he first wrote out his play in prose, almost at a heat, then after the lapse of some time, he put it into verse, and on a third revision gave it correctness and polish. The first conception of his subject entered his brain while listening to music, or immediately after; and one of his dramas, he tells us, he composed while shedding a torrent of tears.

This great poet had not only the merit of reclaiming and dignifying his country's muse, but of kindling a flame in the hearts of his compatriots, which it is to be hoped will never be extinguished.

It was at the sacred fire which Alfieri kindled, that his worthy follower, Vincenzo Monti, lit his torch. It was, while under the influence of the enthusiasm excited by a public rehearsal of Alfieri's Virginius, that he composed his admirable tragedy of Aristodemo, a drama which Italy may well be proud of, which made the most powerful impression on its first appearance, and still continues to excite mingled delight and surprise, that a work, so finished in all its parts, could have been produced by so young an author. The story of this drama is soon told, and is very simple: Aristodemo, to ingratiate himself with the people, in order to gain the crown of Messena, offers up his own daughter as a sacrifice, in the place of the young virgin, who had made her escape after being chosen by lot according to the commands of the oracle. The remorse of the miserable parent, the tender love of his remaining child for her

unhappy father, but particularly the apparition of his murdered daughter, and the vivid description which the agonized old man himself gives of the sacrifice, are fraught with such varied, and at times such horrible interest, that they equal, if they do not at times, perhaps, even surpass in power of portraiture, similar scenes in Macbeth and Hamlet.

This author's first essay was of such promise, that nothing was deemed beyond the reach of successful treatment by the author of Aristodemo; but his next attempt, the Cajo Gracco, disappointed the high, perhaps the extravagant, expectation which his first-born of the muse led the public to entertain. His last drama, Manfred, is even less esteemed than either of the others; in the picture which he there gives of jealousy, the English reader cannot fail of being struck with the close imitation of Shakspeare's Othello; the whole play, indeed, rather shows how carefully the author had studied our mighty wizard, than that his own mind is a well-head of those original imaginings which it was at first presumed to be.

Some are disposed to attribute the decline of

Monti's dramatic talent to the abandonment of his early principles:—

> " No! when the sons of song descend to trade,
> Their bays are sear, their former laurels fade?"

Whether the assigned cause be the true one or not, it were difficult for us to decide. His political life certainly exhibits such inconsistencies and tergiversations, as no excuse can palliate.

Monti set out in life by exposing in his *Basvilliana*, a poem reflecting much of the genius and manner of Dante, the opinions he held of the *atrocious* principles of the French revolution. On republicanism being established in full plentitude over Italy, he, with wonderful discretion veered about, and in his *Prometheus* proclaimed himself a most zealous republican: but when Napoleon, in his despotic way, thought that an iron military government must be the best for Italy, Monti, after mature deliberation, was of the same opinion too; and then he lauded in his songs the enlightened Corsican to the skies. But when Austria once more laid her eagle's claw on unfortunate Italy, Monti thought that after all, the leaden god of Austrian mould was

superior to the golden Jupiter he had so lately adored. It is well that Satan has not since appeared in Italy, or verily Monti would have knelt down and worshipped him also.

These sudden evolutions do not, however, seem always to have thrived with him; for, during the French dynasty, he fled to Paris, and for some time lived in great wretchedness, and once like a savage, on the fruits of the field. These aberrations of genius draw a commiserating sigh from its admirers: and it is even difficult to be severe on the poor poet, whose fickleness in politics is evidently rather to be attributed to a want of firmness of character, than to any more unworthy motive,—a present Deity was shouted round, and Monti bent the pliant knee. He cannot surely be base who in all the more endearing relations of life, as father, husband, and friend, enacts his part in a most exemplary manner, and this Monti ever did.

Besides his dramas, the most noted works of this very versatile author, are his beautiful ode, entitled, *La Bellezza dell Universo*, and his *Translation of Homer's Iliad.*

Inferior in dramatic talent, but far more estimable for his consistency of character, is Ippolito Pindemonte, born at Verona, in 1753. The *Arminio*, of this author, though it continued to support, in some degree, the newly acquired dignity of the Italian drama, is much inferior in power to the best works of his predecessors. The subject is derived from the history of the ancient Germans, and possesses some very striking situations between Velante, the heroine, and her lover, Telgaste, who in opposing the attempted tyranny of his future father-in-law, Arminio, is the remote cause of his death. The scenes which the contending feelings of consanguinity, and of the heart give rise to, are imagined with considerable dramatic skill, but wrought out with inferior vigour. The spirit of the piece flags a little every now and then, and, compared with his models, there is a perceptible want of power in Pindemonte throughout.

This drama, and his eulogy of literary men, establish Pindemonte, in our judgment, rather as an accomplished and amiable man of letters, than as a writer of great power, or much originality of genius.

His contemporary Ugo Foscolo, who, of Venetian parentage, was born at sea, off the Ionian Islands; can hardly be cited with propriety, as having added to the rising reputation of the Italian drama. If unsuccessful in this walk of poetry, however, Italy may still boast of Foscolo as a most distinguished scholar, possessing considerable originality of mind, and still greater originality of character.

His dramas have been singularly unfortunate in undergoing the ordeal of public representation, that decisive criterion of dramatic power: the *Il Tieste*, his first offering at the shrine of Melpomene, drawn after the Greek model, was produced at too early an age to deserve much success, and it met with little; his second tribute to the offended divinities, as a peace-offering, was damned for an unfortunate emphasis on a word by an actor, like that of Thomson's *Sophonisba*, and his last attempt, *Ricciarda*, though the most graciously received of the three, never enjoyed more than a very divided and doubtful fame. Certainly this drama is not deficient in marks of genius, but the style is exces-

sively stiff and elaborate; the easy flow of impassioned eloquence is wanting, and the catastrophe, where a father murders his own daughter, is too horrible to bear representation on the stage.

It is on his other works, therefore, that Foscolo's fame as an author must finally rest. Beside the intrinsic merits of these, they possess a double charm, in displaying the eccentricities of the man. His *Translation of Sterne's Sentimental Journey*, though faithful and well executed, is curious; inasmuch as there cannot be supposed to have been much congeniality of disposition between the translator and his author. The next work of Foscolo that appeared, is also singular,—the *Sketch of Didymus the Clerk*, as proving that his mind, at the time it was written, was not in a very settled state, and that his opinions on many important matters were still to be formed. But it is in the *Last Letters of Ortis*, that the true bent of Foscolo's wild, enthusiastic, and melancholy disposition is fully exhibited. These letters, though with a considerable infusion of Werter-like sentimentality, are full of noble specimens of indignant eloquence on the

wrongs of his suffering country; and it is interesting to know that the aspirations after freedom, there expressed, were no idle vapourings of thoughtless youth, but that the man, in quest of the generous principles of liberty which this work inculcates, himself became an exile, and to preserve his freedom inviolate from French enthralment, wandered first to Switzerland, and finally to England.

In this country, where his brilliant reputation had preceded him, he was received with distinguished honour alike by the noble and the learned of the land; and had the maxims of common prudence been his guide, his emoluments from his writings in Reviews, and his other literary labours, would have furnished him with the means of honourable subsistence. But this was too much to expect from one of the most wayward of all the sons of the Muses!

To rival the brilliant circle in which he moved, he built an elegant villa, furnished it in the first style, according to his own peculiar notions, entertained company like a prince, and lived, in a word,

as though he had been a gentleman, very much at his ease; and all this expense—

> " ——— for a moment think,
> On the meagre profits of pen and ink!"

Foscolo's highly cultivated and powerful mind certainly fitted him to be the ornament of the distinguished society he frequented; and had he only possessed an ordinary command of temper, he would certainly have lived on to the last, respected and caressed. But he was so dogmatic himself, and so impatient of contradiction, (and who that can play the lion likes it?) that when somewhat strenuously opposed, he, at once, put to flight his adversaries, their arguments, and good manners.

Some amusing anecdotes are told of the dilemmas into which this want of self-command, a physiognomy by no means that of an Apollo, and a larger share than usual of human vanity, betrayed him. On one occasion, a Dane, who believed himself on terms so intimate with the poet, that he could use any liberty with him, paid dearly for wounding him in the sensitive point of his personal appearance. The

facetious Dane, not with the best taste in the world, meeting the poet one day in a coffee-house, pretended not to recognise him for some time, staring at him deliberately all the while, at last he stretched out his hand, apologizing politely by saying he had mistaken him for an ourang-outang. A duel, in which the offender received a severe wound on the knee, was the only retort of his enraged quondam friend.

On another occasion, a lady, by way, we may presume, of complimenting him on his loud and emphatic manner of reading love poetry, said, "it appeared to her very like sentimental thunder."

The hours of the poet were chased with winged feet amid the gay circles of London, for more than one brilliant season; but no splendour can last for ever; and poor Foscolo's reckless extravagance, soon made him acquainted with the inexorable officers of the law.

From being the tenant of his elegant villa, (the *Digamma Cottage*, as it was entitled by his friends,) where he was waited on at all times by three beautiful servants, called the three Graces; he wandered

from one poor suburban residence to another, as unfixed in mind, as he was in habitation. Nothing seemed now to weigh so heavily on his spirits, as the fear that his means would not allow him to die like a gentleman, surrounded by statues and pictures, solaced by strains of music, and cheered by draughts of nectar, served to him by beautiful Hebes.

His eccentricities had hitherto rather been amusing, the close of his career was truly distressing. His constitution impaired by literary labour, and anxiety of mind, gave way at length to over-exertion, and the poor poet fell a victim to a dropsy, without leaving means enough to defray his funeral expenses.

If nothing else shall survive of Foscolo, his poem *Dei Sepolcri*, which breathes the very soul of melancholy and poetry, and his admirable critical essays on Dante and Petrarch, in which the genius of the latter particularly is so intimately felt, and so finely set forth, will hand his name down to posterity with distinction.

The worthy successor of these illustrious writers

was Alessandro Manzoni, who still survives, and is entitled to our notice in this place, not only as a man of genius and a dramatic author of distinguished ability, but as having been the author of a new epoch in the Italian drama. Hitherto, however much Melpomene might have gained in energy and refinement, she had been still under the shackles of those eternal unities. These Manzoni has attempted boldly to strike off, and though without doubt, his example will in the end be followed by the best effects, it has not yet been attended with all the beneficial consequences that were expected.

The first tragedy of Manzoni, *Il Conte Carmagnuola*, in which the way along this new path was shown, had the advantage of being founded on incidents recorded in the pages of native Italian history. The Count Carmagnuola, employed by the Venetians against the Milanese, after gaining a great battle, is sentenced to the block by the Senate, his only alleged crimes being some slight previous reverses, but the real cause of his condemnation being the jealousy and dislike which his overbearing deportment excited in the

minds of the State Inquisitors. This plot, as may be conceived, is too simple; the speeches are also generally too long, and the wife and family of the unfortunate general are not brought sufficiently forward, to excite the interest which their position was calculated to engender.

In the *Adelchi*, the poet has improved upon his first attempt, to a very considerable extent. In the daughter of the Lombard King, Desiderius, the rejected bride of Charlemagne, we have a sweet portrait of resignation; but the poet sins against poetical truth and propriety, in representing Charlemagne as cruel and unjust to the Lombards, and there is even less of poetical justice in the conclusion, or of satisfaction to the reader, or spectator, in the unmerited misfortunes by which the injured princes of his drama are overwhelmed.

As a novelist, we shall have farther occasion to mention Manzoni with honour, and as the founder of a new school in Italy.

The countryman of Manzoni, Silvio Pellico, with whose name the public has lately been made fami-

liar, by the pathetic narration of his long and barbarous imprisonment in an Austrian dungeon, can be cited as a more successful writer in the new manner. The *Francesca Da Rimini*, drawn from the well-known beautiful episode in Dante, has the peculiar charm of representing a beautiful object already familiar to the mind, under, in some degree, a new light. The scene in which Paolo and Francesca mutually reveal their long concealed and fatal loves, is beautifully imagined, and admirable in the purity and vigour of the dialogue. The catastrophe too is finely wrought out; the justice which the injured husband takes on his supposed guilty brother is in excellent keeping with the rest of the composition. It is also a great improvement on the original story to suppose Paolo only guilty in thought. This drama still keeps the stage, and is often played with great applause in Italy.

The *Eufemio da Messina* of Pellico, has also considerable dramatic effect, and variety of incident.

The other works of this author, which have gained the public approbation, are the translation

of Byron's Manfred, a compliment which our poet returned by translating the *Francesca.*

We have also the narrative of his imprisonments, *Le mie prigioni,* already mentioned, with some later tragedies, and a very recent work on the Moral Duties of Man, full of sound maxims of morality and true Christianity. Whether it is that Pellico's misfortunes have impaired his natural vigour, or that the incubus which oppresses Italy, weighs heavily upon his spirit, there is a perceptible want of fire throughout his later dramas.

The *Antonio Foscarini* of Niccolini, to conclude our notices, is a tragedy of some merit, forcibly reminding the reader of the Venetian dramas of Byron, in the bitter reproaches cast on the tyranny of that aristocracy, misnamed a republic.

The true path has, at all events, been pointed out by these distinguished dramatists, and it is to be hoped that their successors, as they have been emancipated from the false proprieties of the old French school, will carefully avoid the atrocious principles of the one now in vogue, according to which murder, indecency, and revolting immo-

rality of all kinds, are considered the legitimate sources of dramatic inspiration, and rather choose the better days of the English drama for imitation, in their endeavours to arrive at that true and only legitimate end of tragic representation, which is to "touch and mend the heart." Much has already been done, and Italy only requires the restoration of her freedom, to have a young and vigorous spirit infused into her recently awakened muse, and to see her gifted sons as distinguished in this walk of the drama, as they were long since in other branches of literature.

CHAPTER XXII.

Travels with a Swiss Colonel from Parma to Milan—The Colonel a great admirer of arbitrary rule—Portrait of a hypochondriac—Milan—The Brera—The Austrian soldiers in the Picture Gallery—The Cathedral—Austrian rule in Italy—The excuse of its panegyrists—An impartial statement of the condition of the Lombards under Austria.

It was my fortune, or rather misfortune, to travel from Parma to Milan in the society of a Swiss colonel, in the Neapolitan service. The disquisitions of this veteran on military obedience and the inimitable perfection of absolute governments, intended doubtless to be very instructive, were not therefore, extremely entertaining, and seemed to come with singular ill-grace from the mouth of a Swiss; but his republican predilections, if he ever

had any, and his love of the freedom associated with the name of his native mountains, appeared to have melted away, under the sunny influence of Neapolitan pay. These topics, however, were endurable compared with the woeful, and never-ending tales of the hypochondriac, for such was the poor Colonel, who was in fact, returning to Switzerland, to try what remedial influence his native air possessed.

His fancies were almost as whimsical as those of the man who imagined he was made of glass, and was therefore afraid of sitting down, lest he should break such fragile ware; or those of the baker, who fancying himself made of butter, cautiously shunned the fire. The Colonel's weak point was his stomach, the coats of which, by too much rubbing together, and congenital weakness, he imagined had become so worn and threadbare, that nothing short of the miracle of getting an entire new suit of coats could ever restore it to the power of performing its office; no aliment except milk and water, with a little bread soaked in it, by spoonfuls, could he be prevailed upon to take. He had first, as he in-

formed us, intended to confine himself to bread and water, but having in the course of his reading in philosophy, got a hint of the animalculæ which inhabit the pure element, he had abandoned water unless corrected by the addition of milk. Small as was the quantity of nourishment he took, no baker was ever half so attentive in watching the processes by which flour and water are converted into bread, and the operations of his oven, as was the poor invalid to those actions by which the food he had eaten was made part of himself, and to the performance of his own peculiar culinary organ—the stomach.

These discussions on digestion were seldom interrupted, except to be varied, by way of interlude, as it were, by sudden bursts of passion against the vetturino, who, cunning rogue, never came within reach of the colonel's sword, or he would indubitably have left his head behind him as a forfeit, or peace-offering; for the contumacious driver, as an amusement, seemed to take pleasure in drawing out the Colonel's wrath, as well as sword; but he always kept at a discreet distance from the

point. The only advantage I reaped in being thus accompanied, and it was no small one, was, the immunity I enjoyed from the annoyance of custom-house officers; for no sooner was the colonel's name announced, than the gates flew open without farther inquiry, or any examination of our luggage, and we were wished by these under-satellites of power, cap in hand, a happy termination to our journey.

Milan presents numerous features of resemblance to Paris. The private houses, and many of the hotels, have the same loftiness and massiveness as those of the French metropolis. The people, too, seem to have much of the bustling spirit, and not a little of the vivacity of the French; above all, Parisian fashions are no where more scrupulously followed than at Milan.

Milan being the seat of the Austrian government in Italy, is amply provided with soldiers; to say nothing of official persons, their numerous dependents, and a countless host of domestic spies. The governor, Regnier, the brother of the Emperor of Austria, is a mere tool in the hands of Metter-

nich, who nowhere enforces his amiable system of absolute rule with greater severity!

The stranger has no better opportunity of witnessing this mode of government reduced to practice than in the Picture Gallery of the Brera. He naturally expects to find the keepers of this depository of the arts in the garb of public servants, dressed in some neat uniform or livery; but no such thing; the guardians of this temple of the muses are armed soldiers, who stalk about with drawn sabres, ready to cut any one down, it is to be presumed, who should be deemed to approach a picture too closely; and, in fact, the traveller who is minutely curious, and who wishes to examine the details of a picture as well as to feel its general effect, is immediately approached by one of these mustachioed heroes, whose fierce looks are enough to secure obedience, and reminded of the law that says, "look, but touch not," at the same time that the sword is raised and brought into readiness, as it seems, to suit the action to the word, in case of the admonition not being instantly attended to. Several exhibitions of this kind reminded me of the story

of Damocles:—these fierce representatives of Austrian rule seemed to me no better calculated to improve a taste for the fine arts in the mind of a free-man, than was the sword suspended by a single hair over the envier of royal greatness, to whet his appetite. One might have hoped, that for the mere sake of propriety, Minerva, wherever else she might appear armed, would have laid aside her helmet and spear in her own peculiar temple. But there is nothing like keeping the sword constantly before the eyes of the Italians; it inspires them with such respect for the powers that be.

Among the fine paintings of the gallery, the three best to my taste were the Marriage of Cana, by Paul Veronese; the Purgatory of Salvator Rosa, in which the appearance of the interceding Virgin imparts a softness to so terrible a subject, hardly to have been expected from the wild genius of Salvator; and the Hagar repudiated by Abraham, of Guercino, in which the venerable patriarch, the forlorn yet submissive desolation of Hagar, and the satisfied jealousy of the retiring Sarah, are admirably pourtrayed. The Ambrosian Library, among

many other valuable curiosities, contains a very ancient manuscript of Josephus.

The Cathedral is a very splendid Gothic pile, not yet completed; and though it wants the mellowing finger of time on its carving to give it the venerable aspect of some of our ancient cathedrals, yet it has its own beauty, and with its white polished marble pinnacles, and numerous statues, glitters in the sun like some bright vision to the beholder. The most curious thing in the interior is the sarcophagus of St. Charles of Borromeo, which is of silver, and blazes with precious stones; but the grateful recollection which his good deeds have secured for him in the memory of his countrymen, is a better monument than the most gorgeous sepulchre.

The roof of this singular pile will generally fill the stranger with more astonishment than any thing in the interior. The exterior of the cathedral of Milan is gained by long flights of steps, and when attained, the visitor is never otherwise than amazed at the immense number of statues he beholds. To whichever side he turns, an unex-

pected statue starts up, which he had not observed before: and many others, which appeared of diminutive height when viewed from the street, he now perceives to be as large as life. In short, so crowded is every part with pious saints and Christian martyrs, that he might fancy himself in a besieged citadel, surrounded by an army of the faithful. Nay, the very needles, as the smaller supports are called, have their appropriate angels, which, although they "do not dance on their points," may be truly said to "shine in the beams of the sun." From this elevated position the view of Milan and the surrounding country is fine; and the breeze inhaled is felt as most refreshing, and the escape, for a moment, from the sultry heat beneath, as quite invigorating. In point of size the cathedral of Milan ranks after St. Peter's and St. Paul's.

The admirers of Austrian rule in Italy, allege in its justification, that the Emperor has effected some useful ameliorations in the condition of the lower classes; and that over the rest, his military sway is as mild as is compatible with that strong

check, which it is necessary to maintain upon the discontented spirits that exist among his subjects. One of the principal boasts of these panegyrists[1] is, that every commune is now provided with the means of receiving elementary instruction; every member of the lower classes, say they, may acquire, gratis, reading, writing, and arithmetic; and for people in the trading ranks of life, there are provided teachers of drawing, mechanics, geography, and the elements of geometry, at a very moderate rate. One-third only of the expense of the free establishments is defrayed by the communes, the remaining two-thirds are paid from the public treasury. Further, it is maintained, that the Austrian rule is by no means a pure despotism; since each province elects its own municipal body for the imposition of taxes, and the regulation of its police; the decisions of these bodies being only subject to the

[1] The reader will read with advantage the very sensible remarks of Count Dal Pozzo, on the Austrian government in Italy. Should this writer be considered as too partial to Austria, by reading a work entitled "La Giovine Italia," which leans as much to the liberal side, and striking a balance between the views defended in the two works, he will probably arrive at conclusions on the subject not far from the truth.

revisal of the central government, and the approval of the Austrian court.

Austria is also said to have been particularly mild in her rule before the revolution of 1821, a period since which the severest measures of the government have been justified by the incessant plotting of the Italians. We are told, moreover, that though the sentence of death has been justly passed against the most criminal of the conspirators, it has invariably been commuted for long and severe imprisonment; and to crown her merits, the enlightened judicial system introduced by Austria, is upheld as cheap, expeditious and equitable. Such is the kernel of the justification which the friends of the black eagle have offered for its iron rule in Lombardy.

However powerful such a defence would be, if advanced by a state for rigorous measures against its own rebellious subjects; when we consider that the claim of dominion which Austria asserts over a large portion of the North of Italy, is founded on a very questionable, indeed on a radically defective title, the excuse, so far, must fall to the ground:

for, were it even admitted, that conquest, and long dominion have made Austria the legitimate sovereign of Milan, and its dependencies; still, what claims can she adduce over Venice, and the many towns that were once subject to her? Over these Austria has no rights save such as the receiver of stolen property may be supposed to have over articles transferred to him by a perfidious, cruel, and despoiling robber.

Surely, in such a case, which is exactly that of Austria with regard to Venice, the most restricted notions of justice ought to lead the possessor to offer something like compensation by the mildest exercise of her irregularly acquired authority, and to meet everything like rebellion against her usurpation, as a species of resistance which neither divine nor human authority can condemn, by mildness and forbearance, not by long imprisonment and persecution.

Can we wonder that the Venetians and the inhabitants of Lombardy are discontented, when Italians are universally excluded from every office to which any emolument is attached; when they see that

the eighty-five millions of francs, which are annually levied upon them, go to support the German government in Italy, and the insolent soldiery whom they meet at every turn, or to maintain the court of Vienna in its splendour; when they find their press subjected to unlimited censure; when most galling restrictions are set upon travelling, and a police is maintained that domineers not only in open day and in public, but insinuates itself into the secrecies of private life? But perhaps the late emperor, who was represented as the most amiable of men, believed this severe discipline to be that which was best calculated to procure the welfare of his unruly and headstrong children, who only required to be accustomed to his fatherly dominion to become as fond of it as his own loving Austrian subjects, wiser, it seems, than the unreasonable man in the play, who exclaimed, "he could eat well, drink well, and sleep well, but that was all." The said Austrians being perfectly satisfied with these three requisites of happiness, and asking nothing more; let them enjoy their ennobling tastes by all means, let them resemble as much as they will the

grisly tenants of their forests, but surely it is unreasonable to expect the spiritual Italians to be satisfied with liberty to indulge their merely animal appetites.

Having lately given a brief outline of Italian tragedy, respect and admiration for the genius of Goldoni and Nota, urge me to take a similar rapid sketch of the rise and progress of Italian comedy. No state has more contributed than that of Venice to the advancement of this amusing department of the drama, and the theatres of none of the Italian cities represent the gay creations of the comic muse so adequately as those of Venice and Milan.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Brief notice of Italian Comedy—Its chief ornaments—Goldoni—Sketch of his character—Rossi a great improver of Comedy—Alberto Nota, —true painter of manners—The general character of Italian Comedy.

" I said that like a picture by Giorgione,
Venetian women were, and so they are,—
Particularly seen from a balcony,
(For beauty's sometimes best set off afar,)
And there, just like a heroine of Goldoni
They peep from out the blind or o'er the bar,
And truth to say, they're mostly very pretty,
And rather like to show it, more's the pity!"

ITALIAN comedy, like her serious sister, has experienced many changes since her birth, which took place shortly after the revival of learning. Like tragedy, comedy commenced, as was to be expected, in an imitation of the ancients; it did not, however,

long retain its original shape, but soon began to fall in with the national taste, and to assume features of its own. The comedy of Italy, therefore, possesses peculiar claims to attention, as illustrating the genius and manners of this country.

Ariosto led the way in comedy and set the example to his countrymen, by imitating Terence; but instead of keeping to the pure taste of his original, he degenerated into ribaldry and indecency, palliated, it is true, occasionally, if the qualification be admissible, with genuine wit. Machiavelli improved very considerably on these rude essays in his *Mandragola*, so called from a pretended charm working drug, by whose agency a libertine is represented as seducing a simpleton's wife, assisted however by a knavish priest and others of the *dramatis personæ*. The subject here is evidently too gross, to stand the test of criticism, it is treated too, in a highly indelicate manner, and though the play is eminently rich in the author's peculiar satirical humour, it cannot be spoken of as a model. The plays of Aretino are of the same licentious description, and would not bear representation in modern times.

To these succeeded the *Commedie dell' Arte*, in which the outline of the story was alone composed by the author, the representation of character and dialogue being left to the discretion and ready wit of the actors. On hearing this singular account, one not conversant with the genius of the Italians, and who had never heard of such exhibitions, would naturally conclude these Comedie to have consisted, like the drama in Greece, on its Thespian origin, in mere satiric buffoonery and indecency: but by a little reflection on the ready spirit of improvisation possessed by Italians generally, on their humorous dialogue and pantomimic powers, we can dispose our minds to believe all that has been recorded of the very great amusement which these representations are frequently said to have furnished. The characters were uniformly the same,—Pantaloon, a Venetian Merchant, a Bolognese Doctor, &c. &c.

The genius who reclaimed the mimic muse, however fresh and wild, from this state of nature, was the celebrated Venetian advocate, Goldoni. She long refused, indeed, to receive the bit and curb from his skilful hands, but he finally succeeded in

subjecting her to his sway, and to what have since been held the laws of the drama.

It has been laid down as a canon in criticism, that it is necessary for the aspirant to the comic crown, to have been a busy actor in our many chequered life; to have seen and felt, before he sets himself down to describe, and to have learned to appreciate the world, in that severest of all schools, which is never entered save by him who has known what it is to want a guinea. In all such preliminary training, our distinguished author had ample experience. Sprung of a good and once wealthy family, the future dramatist at a very early age displayed the bent of his genius, and gave earnest of the powers that lay in embryo within him. It is recorded, as a fact, without a precedent, or a parallel, that at the age of eight years, he composed a comedy to the entire satisfaction of his nurse, usually a most indulgent critic indeed,—yet the anecdote is interesting.

His father, a physician by profession, was anxious to train up his son as a future Æsculapius, and himself to show him the way in which he should go;

but the young gentleman, like most other inexperienced beginners, thought he felt as insuperable moral objections to committing murder, as did Gil Blas himself. To escape the necessity of entering on this homicidal calling, therefore, the youthful Goldoni enlisted under the banners of Momus, in a strolling company, that place of refuge for all those lively youths who feel greater inclinations for play than work. His original bent, it may be presumed, was strongly fostered and encouraged in such company. But he was before long reclaimed from the error of his ways, by his parents, and to gratify their importunities, he embraced the dry profession of the law, of which, had the fire within permitted him, if we may judge from the triumphant issue of his first cause, he would have become a distinguished ornament.

It would take too much time to follow him through all the Protean changes he underwent, and which are described so pleasantly in that truly comic production his auto-biography. At one period, he was secretary to a commissioner of revenues; at another, the chief of a company of come-

dians; now he was robbed and left destitute on the high road by a band of lawless soldiers; in the next moment, he was relieved by some heaven-sent protector, and made one of the accredited consuls of government. Here, he composed for the Opera, there for the heroes of the sock, and after that, he gave instructions to the younger members of the royal family of France, as their Italian tutor. His love adventures, we may readily suppose, were as numerous as his general adventures in life. Like most other men, he had his first love, but we do not see that this was by any means his last. Fully qualified then by experience, when he began to write his dramas, teeming as they do with the changeful incidents of life, embodying its romantic, but still comic scenes, and full of striking pictures of the truly national characters he encountered every day, he soon attracted the notice not only of his admiring countrymen, but of Europe at large.

The comedies of Goldoni, as was naturally to be expected from one who wrote for bread, and who knew nothing of leisure and retired ease,

are not without many blemishes, the principal of which are, want of concentration, a deficiency of poignant wit and humour, and numerous traces of hasty writing. To exhibit the fertility of his fancy, it is enough to mention that he actually composed sixteen comedies in one year,—a fecundity unrivalled, save perhaps by Lope, and which puts the fertile fancy of Scribe to the blush. Pressed by his employers upon one occasion, he began to work on THE UNKNOWN SUBJECT,—the subject being literally unknown to him, and the play turned out not the worst that had issued from his pen.

His PAMELA and VENETIAN ADVOCATE are among the best and most stately of his productions. Of the lighter effusions of his imagination, the La Villegiatura, where the ridiculous preparations for a trip to the country are drawn to the life; the La Cameriera Brillante, in which a truly lively and witty portrait is given of an intriguing servant maid, deserve particular mention, and these, with a few others of a similar description, are perhaps, even better and happier displays of his genius

than his more elaborate efforts. But the characters that strike the reader most in Goldoni, are his heroines, taken as they are from those love-making dress-loving, play-going, cavalier-servente-followed, fair Venetians, who are exhibited with the happiest minuteness, and most undoubted fidelity, as if he followed Pope's famous rule—

> " Come then, the colours and the ground prepare,
> Dip in the rainbow, trick her off in air,
> Choose a firm cloud before it fall, and in it,
> Catch, ere she change, the Cinthia of this minute."

The great and real merit of Goldoni, however, lies in having reclaimed the comic drama from its state of degradation, and in having prepared the way for his successors, Rossi and Nota, on whom devolved the task of introducing refinement, and the glory of bringing Italian comedy to its present state of perfection.

It is difficult to say how much we owe to the rival of Goldoni, Carlo Gozzi, unless it be that he stimulated Goldoni to greater exertions; for his own plays present too strange a mixture of the tragic and the comic, of the wonderful and the

burlesque, with plots borrowed from the Spanish, to merit commendation.

Rossi, the successor of Goldoni and Gozzi, and a very pleasant writer, was a truer reformer of the Italian comic stage. His characters are drawn with more care, and he is much more polished than Goldoni. The Secondo Giorno is a truly amusing exhibition of the Cavaliere-servente. Il Calzolajo Inglese, or the English shoemaker turned into a mi-Lord and antiquarian virtuoso at Rome, is a very pleasant caricature of an English tradesman, who has become a traveller, and curiosity hunter, merely because his friend and countryman has been so before him. In the other plays of Rossi, the foibles of his opera-going countrymen, and of actors generally, are struck off with genuine humour and happy satire.

Alberto Nota, a living writer of great celebrity, has succeeded still better than his predecessors, in giving interesting and polished exhibitions of manners and society in Italy. La Donna Ambiziosa, in which a vain mother, sacrificing every thing to vanity, is reclaimed; and, I primi passi al mal cos-

tume, in which a wife, on the point of falling into the besetting sin of her country, cicisbeism, repents and is forgiven, are his among first pieces, both of a very moral tendency, and full of Italian life, in which wit and humour arise, more from the natural drawing of the characters than from the force and spirit of the dialogue. His Il Progetista, and L'Ammalata, in the first of which the principal character is a projector or builder of castles, never to be finished, in the second, a sufferer of imaginary diseases, are both rather happy imitations of Moliere, in the continued ridicule kept up upon the chief characters.

To Italian comedy, generally, the expression which Cæsar used when speaking of Terence, is extremely applicable: there is a want of the *vis comica* about it; the whole of the writers we have mentioned have neither the sententious wit of Moliere, nor any thing like an abstract knowledge of nature and the heart, illustrated in their particular characters; still less have they the diamond coruscations of Sheridan, his epigrammatic wit and fire of dialogue; neither again have they the sen-

timental morality of Colman, with his broad humour; nor the faultless symmetry which we admire in the productions of that mender of hearts, Cumberland, who

> " ——— quite sick of pursuing each troublesome elf,
> He grew lazy at last, and drew from himself."

Without attempting to characterize the comic dramatists of Italy by negatives, it will be readily acknowledged by all conversant with their writings, that their true merit consists in being faithful painters of Italian society, giving all its blemishes, and "painting the manners living as they rise."

A stranger may consequently, by frequenting the national theatre of Italy, obtain a truer insight into the customs and character of Italian society than he can attain, by the same means, of that of any other country; and this must surely be allowed to be a merit of a very high order. Whether it is the effeminate, idle, and slavish Cavalier-Servente—the cunning fair one, who makes her lover and slave pay for all her vanities in dress, or her extravagance in play—the willingly-duped husband,

himself similarly engaged in another quarter—the lounger of the coffee-house, embarrassed for the want of a shilling—the eternally quarrelling heroes and heroines of the drama—there they are to be found as fresh and natural as they exist in the world itself. Could the Italians only by any means contrive to infuse into their comic drama a small portion of light French wit and honest English humour, it would undoubtedly possess a very high degree of perfection, and would then suffer nothing in contrast with the best productions of the comic muse in ancient, or in modern times.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE MORE CELEBRATED OF THE EARLY ITALIAN REPUBLICS.

MILAN.

On the fall of the Roman Empire, in the fifth century, when the various barbarous hordes from Germany overspread the southern and more civilized parts of Europe, the rich plains of Lombardy were seized upon, and settled by the Goths. Under Odoacer, and Theodoric the Ostrogoth, Ravenna was established as the capital of their half barbarous empire; and for the space of sixty-four years, till overthrown by Belisarius and the Greek eunuch, Narses, this tribe retained firm possession of their newly-acquired lands in the north of Italy. The jealousy existing between the Greek generals led to the introduction of the Lombards, another Gothic horde, under the conduct of Alboin, into Italy

about the middle of the sixth century. Subjected to this new authority, Pavia raised her head, as the seat of the Lombard dominion, which extended far and near, almost to the gates of Rome. The native Italians suffered severely under the iron sway of their new conquerors, and so inveterate was the antipathy which existed between the two people, completely preventing their amalgamation, that the only feelings indulged were such as arise between master and slave: the tyranny of the oppressor was returned two-fold by the hate of the oppressed. Notwithstanding these internal sources of decline, the Lombard power flourished for two hundred years, under twenty successive sovereigns; till, in the middle of the eighth century, it received the first shock from Pepin, and was shortly after completely overthrown by the overwhelming force of Charlemagne. The rest of Italy, during this period, was either subject to the Greek Empire, or divided into a number of small independent states.

From the time that Charlemagne placed the iron crown of Lombardy on his head, only seventy-three years had elapsed when this rich acquisition dropped from the hands of his unworthy descendant, Charles le Gros. Upon the overthrow of this dynasty, Italy, during

the latter part of the ninth, and the greater part of the subsequent century, a prey to internal dissension, citizen being in array against citizen, and castle against castle, was grievously infested by the Hungarians in the north, and the piratical Saracens in the south. The incursions of these last marauders were, however, attended with one happy effect, namely, the erection, by the towns subject to their attacks, of forts and towers for their defence. The cities thus left to their own resources, and municipal administration, soon learned to estimate aright their natural strength, and before long began to place on a permanent foundation, that independence which accident had thus presented to them. Another circumstance, which aided the cause of liberty essentially, was the large concessions which the rival competitors for the Empire, Berenger, Duke of Friuli, and Guido, Duke of Spoleto, were obliged to make to their respective subjects. The descendants of this Berenger being dethroned by Otho the Great, of Germany, and the towns being encouraged by him to throw off their allegiance to their respective counts, gave a fresh impulse to the rising cause of freedom, and led to the establishment of independent municipal institutions all over Italy, but still without trenching on the paramount

rights of the Emperor. The imperial superiority was firmly maintained by the talents of the Othos in the tenth century; but during the first half of the eleventh, under the Conrads and Henrys, the authority of the Emperor could scarcely be said to exist in the free towns. Frederick Barbarossa, however, in 1155, changed the face of affairs. The civil dissensions arising from the war of Lodi, and the ten years' siege of Como, offering a fair opening for this cruel conqueror, he availed himself of the mutual animosities of the republics, to attack the city of Milan; after a long and severe struggle he succeeded in rasing its foundations, and was guilty of the still greater barbarity of putting the hostages he received to death. This cruelty was before long visited upon the head of the destroyer, who had four armies annihilated by war and pestilence; and was himself, at last, obliged to fly alone to Pavia. The disasters which befel this despot gave peace to Italy, and restored their independence to the different republics.

The most distinguished sovereign who ruled in Italy after Barbarossa, was Frederick II., of Naples, who ascended the throne in 1216. The acquirements of this accomplished prince were not confined to letters, in which he greatly excelled; he farther gained great

glory in arms, distinguishing himself in the crusades, and long established a paramount influence in Italy to the great annoyance of the Pope. The brilliant qualities of Frederick were, however, sometimes stained with cruelty and perfidiousness. About this epoch the various petty superiors, who under the titles of Duke, Prince, &c. afterwards make so important a figure in the history of Italy, began to appear in the different republics. They were introduced in the first instance as governors, or in times of urgency as protectors of the several towns; but the opportunities presented by the possession of power, were turned by these crafty princes into the means of their private aggrandizement, and ended in the establishment of despotism in the room of independence. The glory of Milan closed as a free republic with the accession of the family Della Torre to the government. Whatever fame she afterwards gained, was only as she participated in the military renown of her governors, of her Matteo Visconti, her Francesco Sforza, &c.

If some few of these petty usurpers showed themselves good princes, the majority were tyrants and oppressors. However, Milan long continued to reap the benefits of her early free institutions, being blessed

for a considerable time with all the signs which indicate the prosperity of states,—a numerous population, great commercial wealth arising from her manufactures, and a flourishing condition of the arts, which here attained as high a pitch of perfection as they ever reached, under the inventive genius of Leonardo Da Vinci, and the school he established.

The fate of Milan, one of the earliest among the Italian republics, has been singular; it would seem as if she had been for ages marked out by destiny, as the principal victim of German oppression and intolerance. For, though the French had temporary possession of the city under Charles VIII. and Louis XII., but particularly under Francis I., yet Milan, as a natural prey, soon reverted to the Germans under Charles V., whose descendants, the cruel or weak Philips of Spain, either tyrannized over her in person, or by their despotic vicegerents, a Duke of Lerma, or a Louis de Haro. And singular enough, when Philip V. of the Bourbon family, mounted the throne of Spain, Milan and the Milanese were again like a kind of family property entailed upon the German princes; and here the house of Austria, except during the short-lived sway of Napoleon, have continued to maintain their leaden dominion ever since.

PISA.

Pisa, like Venice, Holland, and other maritime states, may be said to have been indebted to the smallness of her territory for her greatness: hemmed in within narrow bounds by the Maremmæ, and neighbouring rival towns, she had the sea alone to look to for support; but that which was at first the means of supplying her earliest inhabitants with subsistence, became, under the influence of free laws and a popular government, which invariably engender nobility and enterprise of disposition, the avenue to commercial wealth, and even to political greatness.

It is difficult to trace the remote origin of this republic. The earliest notice which we have of its existence that is at all worthy of confidence, records the brave defence made in 871, before Salerno, against the Saracens. The assistance which the city of Pisa gave to Otho II. is the next, and a memorable event in her history; for this led to the settlement, in her territories, of seven powerful nobles, who had come as ambassadors of the emperor, and afterwards proved the ornament and support of the State. About the same period, the Repub-

lic assumed a more settled form, the chief executive power being lodged in the hands of Consuls chosen by the different companies, out of the respective quarters of the city. This primitive and free form of constitution degenerated in the course of time, as in so many of the other small republics, into an oppressive aristocracy.

None of the Italian States so early distinguished themselves at sea as Pisa; as far back even as the tenth and eleventh centuries, so formidable had her naval power become, that she was, at once, the terror of the piratical Saracens, and the defence of the neighbouring towns from their incursions. Sardinia was the constant field of contention between Pisa and her Moorish foes. During the bitter warfare that was so long carried on between them, Pisa was very nearly being captured by the formidable Saracen chief, Muset. This crafty general, knowing the unguarded state of the town, when the fleet was absent, fell upon it by surprise; and would have succeeded in carrying its ramparts, but for the heroism of an intrepid woman, by name Chinzica, of the family of Sismondi, who by sounding the alarm, and by her example in reanimating her panic-struck countrymen to a vigorous resistance, was the glorious means of rescuing her native city from the Moorish sword. The Moorish chief after-

wards paid dearly for this bold attempt, having been met and routed with great slaughter by the Pisans, aided by their allies, the Genoese.

This union of Pisa with Genoa, was, ere long, destined to be turned into deadly animosity. While united, they greatly distinguished themselves in the Crusades, and no state at first, gained higher honour than Pisa in the East, or by it, acquired greater commercial advantages in Cæsarea, Antioch, and other Syrian towns; at home also she extended her power, by the conquest of the Balearic Isles, Majorca and Ivica.

About the middle of the twelfth century however, that sanguinary rivalry with Genoa commenced, which Pisa maintained with little intermission till her downfall. In the first contest of these States, about the island of Sardinia, victory declared for the Pisans. And here, ere the tide of fortune turn, we may pause to contemplate the most brilliant period of her history.

The territorial possessions of Pisa, considering her humble origin, and the smallness of their amount at first, were now amazingly extensive, comprising at home nearly all Sardinia, Corsica, Elba, and the Balearic Isles; and abroad she had most flourishing colonies at St. John d'Acre and Constantinople. Riches and

luxury became her handmaids, and the arts rose within her precincts from barbarism, at a period anterior to that at which they began to show that they still existed in any of the other states of Italy. The Campo Santo and its Paintings, the Cathedral and the Leaning Tower, bear witness to the early proficiency of Pisa in the arts.

If Pisa started first in the race of glory, her course, it is sad to think, was also soonest run. The first shock she received was from the rising power of Genoa, in 1284, when her fleet experienced a severe defeat. Though this was a disastrous event, still the spirit of freedom and of rivalry made her rise with fresh vigour from the blow. The citizens of Pisa, young and old, came forward, offering up their persons and their property on the altar of their country. A new fleet was soon equipped, and launched in quest of their late victorious adversary, and though they met on unequal terms, the contest was not declined. The battle that ensued, was of the most desperate description; no one thought of his own life, and there was not a hand on either side to save a drowning countryman, who cried for help. The carnage was immense. The contest was long doubtful, till a reserve of Genoese vessels advanced at the critical moment, and decided the sanguinary con-

flict, by the annihilation of the Pisan fleet. The issue of this, the battle of Meloria, was fatal to Pisa: the prisons of Genoa were crowded with all she boasted as illustrious; her nobles and higher clergy, bound with silver chains, were paraded before the eyes of the Genoese, and her glory was transferred to her rival. Hence arose the saying: If you would see Pisa, you must visit Genoa. Pisa subsequently became a prey to different factions. Florence arose, a new enemy—and the once illustrious Republic finally sunk into insignificance.

FLORENCE.

This celebrated city, which was once a mere faubourg of Fiesole, was reduced, along with its territory, to the form of a Roman province by Sylla, nearly destroyed by Totilla, and repaired by Charlemagne. It does not claim attention in modern history, until about the beginning of the thirteenth century; it was then governed by Consuls chosen by the people, and a Senate composed of one hundred persons. Shortly afterwards, to prevent the cruel feuds which broke out between rival families, a foreign Podesta, or Chief Governor, who from that circum-

stance, it was supposed, would be free from prejudice, was chosen. No town became so much a prey to the animosities of the rival factions of Guelph and Ghibeline, which at that period distracted all Italy. Florence more than any other place was distinguished for her fidelity to the Guelph side, or the party of the Pope, which generally supported the cause of liberty against the Ghibeline interest, or that of the emperors, who were invariably trying to spread their tyrannical rule over Italy. Indeed, so tenacious of their liberty, and jealous of the power of the nobles had the Florentines become, that in 1282 they again changed their constitution, by throwing the power of electing the Six Priors, who were to reign for two months, into the hands of the different trades, in other words, into the hands of the people. A little later, in the early part of the fourteenth century, the Guelphs, jealous of their own body, divided themselves into two celebrated factions, distinguished by the titles of the Black and the White. The former conspiring with Boniface VIII., called in Charles de Valois, the brother of the French King, by which intervention, they gained the preponderance, and succeeded in banishing the White. Among the exiles were included many Ghibelines, and none more distinguished than Dante, and the

father of Petrarch. Both parties have obtained deathless fame, by being placed in the Inferno.

Shortly after this period, the Florentines had a very narrow escape from subjection by Castruccio Castrocani, the cruel but talented tyrant of Lucca, who routed and pursued them to their very gates; indeed, the Florentines being more addicted to letters, than to war, never displayed great prowess in the field; they were, however, sufficiently energetic in maintaining their internal liberties; for the Duke of Athens, another tyrant, wishing to enslave the city while he was governor, the people rose in a body courageously, and indignantly expelled him. This was the most brilliant era of its liberty and prosperity. Next to Venice, Florence was held the richest state in Europe, and her citizen merchants, through their commercial channels, which extended far and near, became the correspondents of Kings, whom they surpassed in wealth, so that the proudest monarchs were glad to have their support and good opinion.

The nobles, who had for some time been deprived of their legitimate share in the government, had their just rights restored to them about this period, by the mediation of the Medici and the Ricci families, the powerful friends of the people; another event also occurred which

tended still further to preserve the just equilibrium of the state. The Ciompi, or lowest class of the community, aspiring to too great power, elected Michael Lando, one of themselves, for their gonfalonier, but he, like a true patriot, when he had been installed in office, far from seconding their turbulent designs, succeeded effectually in repressing their improper violence.

It would be tedious to enter into the petty wars which Florence waged against Pisa, Milan, and Sienna, and even Venice, except to mention that of Sienna she at last obtained possession, by purchase. It has been objected as a grave charge against Cosmo de Medici, who was called the father of his country, that instead of keeping his eye steadily on the true interests of Florence, by preserving the balance between the powerful states of Venice and Milan, he was solely alive to his own aggrandizement. This stain on the Medici, which their subsequent conduct confirmed, cannot be wiped away by all the eloquence of a Roscoe. Sprung from the people, and obtaining political power by maintaining the popular cause, the Medici, nevertheless, abandoned their original principles, as soon as they ceased to be necessary to their advancement; the patriotic Pazzi too, were urged on by the oppressive measures of this

family, to the conspiracy against Julian and his brother, which ended in their destruction.

Lorenzo de Medici too, though a magnificent patron of letters, sacrificed the interests of Florence to the ambition of Ferdinand of Naples. In the same manner Peter de Medici entered into a coalition with Charles the Eighth of France, and introduced him into the city, to the imminent risk of its liberty; nor in the sixteenth century was she more indebted to Leo X., who restored his family sway in Florence; nor to Clement VII., who, in conjunction with the French, betrayed her over to the Imperialists; and though her last struggle against the Prince of Orange, was a noble one, yet she soon fell under the power of Charles the Fifth, who establishing Alexander de Medici as her tyrant, that constitution was finally abolished, for the integrity of which the Florentines had for centuries so nobly struggled. The only excuse, that can be brought forward to screen the more than dubious character of the Medici, is the splendid encouragement which Cosmo, Lorenzo, and Leo gave to letters—the generous support they extended to the learned Greek exiles, and to the schools for learning the sciences, and above all, the princely patronage they bestowed on the fine arts, which during the sixteenth

century shed a lustre on Florence and its Dukes, which will last as long as the names of Angelo and Raphael shall endure.

The constitution of Florence which we have thus briefly and imperfectly sketched, cannot be held up as a model; the power of government was too much divided; nor had the aristocracy their due weight in the State, which from this unbalanced condition was constantly a prey to faction; yet, on the whole, when we view the tyranny that had been established early over the minor States; when we behold the egregious oppressions practised on the people even in constitutional Venice; when we observe the already flourishing state of the rising arts and sciences during the greater portion of the fifteenth and subsequent century; when we reflect that their feuds were rarely attended with much loss of life, but only temporary banishment, we shall be led to the conclusion, that Florence possessed in her free constitution, though occasionally disturbed, advantages which she could not, without being the loser, have exchanged for that of any other Italian State, much less for a form of government calculated on the model of the larger despotisms of Europe.

Of the Medici Dukes, who succeeded their distin-

guished progenitors, little that is good can be said;—the first Alexander, was a lascivious monster; Lorenzino attempted to gain the throne by embrueing his hands in blood; Cosmo was the persecutor of the patriot Strozzi; Ferdinand encouraged the Marine; Cosmo II. distinguished himself against the barbarians; Ferdinand II. was a weak prince, but during his long reign an excellent Academy of Sciences was established at Florence.

VENICE.

Beneath is spread, like a green sea,
The waveless plain of Lombardy,
Bounded by the vaporous air,
Islanded by cities fair;
Underneath day's azure eyes
Ocean's nursling,—Venice,—lies,
A peopled labyrinth of walls,
Amphitrite's destined halls,
Which her hoary sire now paves
With his blue and beaming waves.

VENICE, the once renowned mistress of the Adriatic, the terror of the Greek Empire, the former emporium of the trade of the world,—the seat of the arts,—the dispenser of luxury over Europe,—the queen of a hundred isles,—must always form a subject of the

deepest interest. In her days of prosperity no one might dispute her claims to wisdom, power, and greatness. Her constitution and laws were the theme of praise of a Machiavelli, and the profoundest thinkers; it was a kind of heresy to doubt their excellence. Since she has fallen, it may be interesting, in a brief historical survey, to examine dispassionately, neither awed by the splendour of her victories, nor dazzled by the glare of her riches, whether she really possessed that faultless constitution for which she has been so much extolled.

No state in Europe can mount so high in tracing its descent; no nobility can boast a more illustrious ancestry, ascending in their genealogical tree, to the ancient Romans. Passing over these now indifferent inquiries, and the question in what relation Venice formerly stood to Rome, we can trace her history uninterruptedly from the fifth century.

The earliest certain records mention, that at about this period, the reedy islands of the Adriatic, upon which Venice afterwards arose, afforded a safe retreat to the inhabitants of the neighbouring continent, from the irruptions of the Goths, and Huns, under Attila. They soon built themselves a town on the island of Rialto, and, protected by the intricacies of the surrounding

canals, they defied alike Theodoric the Ostrogoth, and Alboin the Lombard. Nay, the formidable Pepin, and the still more redoubtable Charlemagne, could make no lasting impression on the impregnable position which these early refugees from oppression had selected for their dwelling.

The earliest traces of the political constitution of Venice date from the year 697, the first Doge, or Duke, having been then elected. She, however, long confined herself at home, and seems to have taken little interest in all that was passing in the world around her; neither the irruptions of fierce Hungarians, nor of Otho the Great, who ravaged or brought Italy under subjection, in the course of the tenth century, appearing to have been regarded by Venice in any other light than as passing storms, with which, as they did her no injury, she was nowise concerned. But the pride of Venice growing, after this epoch, with her increasing population, she became dissatisfied with her narrow limits, and Dalmatia and Trieste were added to her territories. It was, however, in the wars of the Crusades which so soon ensued, that the lengthened and bright career of Venice in glory and in conquest commenced, no state, if we except Genoa, having gained more numerous naval victo-

ries or exhibited greater military prowess than she, in the course of these singular expeditions; nor was fame her only reward; the commercial advantages she gained in Ptolemais, Jerusalem, Tyre, and Ascalon, were of the highest value to her, and far more than indemnified her for all the expenses of her armaments

The great consideration in which Venice was now held was not confined to the East; she had the glory also of assisting Alexander III. at home, in humbling the fierce Barbarossa; and in return for her support, and as a lasting memorial of the esteem of that firm but ambitious Pontiff, she received from his hands, in 1183, a ring, with which to espouse the sea, and shadow forth the empire which he bestowed upon her over the waters of the globe. This was the memorable origin of the nuptials of Venice with the Adriatic, celebrated yearly in the Bucentaur.

When the Christian powers in the thirteenth century turned their united arms against Constantinople, diverting them from their original purpose, the conquest of Jerusalem, the victory of Venice at Zara, was only a prelude to the laurels she gained under the banners of the blind old doge Dandolo, in the capture of the Capital of the Eastern world. To her share of the

spoils thus taken, fell Corfu, one-fourth of Constantinople, and other places in the East.

Hitherto we have marked the progress of Venice unimpeded by a single reverse;—her possessions, ample in the East, her commerce extensive, and daily on the increase, her merchants the carriers of the luxuries of Asia and Africa, by Constantinople, the Black Sea, and Egypt; her city opulent as internal wealth could make it; the rising arts ministering to its magnificence, and emanating from this as from a sanctuary over the rest of semi-barbarous Europe.

Here, therefore, we may pause, and contemplate Venice at the highest pinnacle of her greatness; for, though her commerce went on increasing, though she even made new acquisitions of territory, and the arts still advanced under her fostering care, till the close of the fifteenth century, yet her gains were now counterbalanced by occasional severe losses, sustained from the Genoese, the growing power of the Ottoman Empire, and the jealousies of the European states. The history of Venice, during the course of the thirteenth century, is also memorable for another reason, which is, that she was thus uniformly glorious, before her free republican institutions were subverted by the over-reaching ambition

of the nobles. This shows, in opposition to what has sometimes been maintained, that the successes of Venice and her influence as a European power were by no means due to her aristocracy; nay, it proves more than this, for it shows that the first backward step she made was connected with the exclusion of the community at large, from all significant participation in the affairs of government.

Henceforward, then, Venice was destined to descend, slowly it is true, but still perceptibly, from the high and palmy station she had long occupied so proudly. The first outward cause of her decay is undoubtedly to be sought for in the growing importance, and then in the successful rivalry of Genoa, in the beginning of the fourteenth century. Nothing could exceed the mutual hatred with which these famous republics were animated. Had they been aware of their true interests, they would have coalesced for mutual support, and not have strained every nerve, as they did for more than a century, to accomplish the destruction of each other. In their earliest engagements with the Genoese at Loiera, the Venetians were successful, but shortly after, at Sapienza, the Venetian fleet, under Pisani, was signally defeated by Paganino Doria, the Genoese admiral. This first

success of the Genoese was trifling compared with the victories which followed; for in 1379, Lucian Doria again defeated Pisani at Pola, and Peter Doria shortly after took the advanced rampart of the city, Chiozza, and threatened Venice herself.

Nothing could be more appalling than the aspect of affairs to the inhabitants of the proud city, in this her hour of humiliation. Their Admiral Pisani had been thrown into prison, in consequence of the resentment excited against him by his late reverses, and the principal fleet of the Republic, under Zeno, was off the coast of Naples; reduced to extremities, and without all means of effectual resistance,—compromise, on any terms short of subjection, was offered to the victors. The humble propositions of the besieged, however, were haughtily rejected, and the contumelious answer returned, that no concessions would be made to Venice, till a bridle had been placed on the horses of St. Mark. This overweening spirit saved the Venetians; their pride being wounded, they rose in a body, released Pisani, equipped a fresh fleet, obtained some advantages, and aided by the timely arrival of the long wished-for fleet under Zeno, defeated the Genoese, blockaded them at

Chiozza, and subsequently compelled them to retire, with loss, from the territory of the republic.

Nearly a century earlier than these memorable events, namely, in 1297, the constitution underwent a remarkable change, in the great council being made permanent and hereditary, under the dogeship of Grandenigo, by which the whole political power of the state became centered in the aristocracy. This, when looked upon as an engine for the oppression and degradation of the people, which it was, cannot be viewed as a favourable change; nor does there now appear to have been any necessity for introducing the Council of Ten, and the body of odious State Inquisitors, with unlimited powers over the life and property of every citizen. The most celebrated instances of the exertion of this irresponsible authority were those which occurred against the Doge Marino Faliero, and the son of a Doge, Jacopo Foscari; the first, for a conspiracy against the state, to form which he had been urged on with a view to take revenge on the nobles for the insult that had been offered to him by Michael Steno, one of that proud order who had written injurious calumnies on the state chair, reflecting on the virtue of the wife of the Doge; the second,

Jacopo Foscari, for the alleged crime of receiving a bribe from a foreign state, for which he was unjustly imprisoned, and tortured to such a degree, and so long, that death finally put an end to his sufferings in the prison of Venice.

These alterations of internal policy, by which the highest and the lowest were alike liable to be arraigned and convicted without public trial, and executed in privacy, however oppressive they must have been felt at home, did not seem to have impaired the warlike spirit of the Venetians abroad, in the series of wars which, after the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet, in 1453, Venice waged against the Turks.

Of the advantages her commerce derived from many possessions in the East, the fruits of those victories,—Cyprus, Candia, the Morea, and the islands of the Archipelago, which had alternately changed masters during the contest, there can be no dispute; but it has been doubted, and on good grounds, whether her neighbouring feudalities of Padua, Verona, Vicenza, Rovigo, and Brescia, by exposing her to the envy of surrounding states, did not weaken her power, and waste her resources in their maintenance. Besides these, there were other causes for her decline in territorial greatness and com-

mercial wealth, which now came into operation; the discovery of America by the Spaniards, and of India by the Portuguese, by pointing out other channels of commerce than those over which Venice had hitherto held the entire control, gave a death-blow to her trading monopoly; and the subsequent successive invasions of Italy, by the French, Spaniards, and Germans, affected her very existence as a state. Of these ultramontane hordes, Charles VIII. led the van; and although Venice did not support this first hostile intruder, she failed to oppose him, and in the following invasions, under Louis XII. and Francis I. she observed the still more doubtful policy of siding with the foreigner, for a considerable period, against her countrymen. In the sixteenth century her martial spirit continuing, Venice was distinguished for three great achievements: first, her successful struggle against confederated Europe, headed by the Pope, in the spoliating league of Cambray; secondly, the glorious victory of Lepanto over the Ottoman power; and thirdly, her unyielding opposition to Paul V. in his attempts to encroach upon her civil rights.

The seventeenth century was marked by the conquest of the Morea from the Turks, and some other successes,

alternated with occasional reverses; but in the following century Venice verged rapidly to her downfall; the sources of ruin were ripening silently within her own bosom. Instead of siding with either party in the dispute between France and Austria for the Spanish succession, she observed an ill-judged neutrality, to the utter decay of the spirit of her army [1]; her navy also rapidly declined, from similar causes; and the internal condition of the city presented a still more distressful scene. The insolence and oppressions of the nobles over the people, the arbitrary and secret mode by which the government was administered, mistaken for profound wisdom, the general depravity of morals, and the poverty of the great bulk even of the nobles, were all fruitful elements of disorganization. Accordingly, when Venice should have coalesced with other states against the desolating arms of republican France, towards the close of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century, by becoming a prey to civil dissensions, every order in the state attacking the rights of the other, she fell an easy victim to the craft and policy of Napoleon, who shortly handed her over against all

[1] See the excellent history of Venice by Daru.

honour and faith, as a make-weight to the grasping power of Austria.

In reflecting on the history of Venice, her blind admirers think that she is entitled to unqualified admiration for her extensive conquests, her unbounded wealth, the imperturbable and unchangeable nature of her constitution, and above all, for its unparalleled duration, all which blessings they attribute to the uncontrolled influence of an aristocracy, supported by the strong arm of a wise but arbitrary administration. This may be replied to, by asking, whether such a sacrifice of personal liberty be necessary for the safety and permanency of a state?—and next, even admitting that it were, whether such a blessing is not too dearly purchased at so high a price?

We have already seen Venice in a flourishing condition before she was ruled by an overweening aristocracy; its existence, therefore, was not indispensable to secure that prosperity. If it be further asserted, that the duration of Venice is alone attributable to her aristocracy, this is no assurance of a government intrinsically good; and if it were tyrannical and unjust, the longer it continued, the greater was the injury inflicted; and certainly Venice, by the oppression

of the people, and the arbitrary, cruel, and disgusting severity exercised against all the members of the state, cannot be included in the more favourable predicament. Finally, in her downfall, all friends of humanity, must deplore not the loss of her then corrupt constitution, but the golden opportunities that have been taken from her, by her oppressors, of introducing salutary and necessary reforms for the regeneration of her internal polity, and the change of her worn out tyranny for freer and wiser principles of government.

CHAPTER XXV.

A BRIEF NOTICE OF THE MOST REMARKABLE POPES.

THERE are few subjects on which it is more difficult to obtain correct and impartial information, than the lives of the Roman Pontiffs. The passions engendered by mutually opposed religious persuasions have of late so constantly been enlisted in the inquiry, the mists of prejudice have so uniformly dimmed the clear sight of every writer, zealously attached to one or other of the two great forms of Christianity, that it is now nearly impossible to arrive at any thing like accurate information. Without pluming ourselves on having attained the happy medium, or state of perfect impartiality which

has been supposed necessary to enable men to judge sanely upon any question of interest, we may perhaps, by striking a balance between conflicting testimonies, and taking the ascertained laws of human nature and the principles of sound philosophy for our guide, neither receiving without qualification the highly coloured pictures of Papal perfection to be found in a Baronius, a Bellarmine, and other cismontane writers; nor, on the other hand, yielding our implicit faith to the evidently jaundiced, though respectable authorities, of a Mosheim, or a Fra Paoli, and still less taking for testimony the witty but deistical railleries of a Voltaire, a Gibbon, and a Bayle, the brief summary which we purpose giving has been gleaned, not without much trouble, from the Annales Ecclesiastici of Baronius, Giannone on the History of Naples and the Church, Hallam's Middle Ages, and Denina on the Revolutions of Italy, sources which, if not perfectly unexceptionable, are at least the freest from the flagrant perversions of truth, elsewhere to be met with.

It is admitted on all hands, that during the three or four first centuries of the Christian era, the conduct of the Roman Pontiffs, under the chastening hand of poverty, and Pagan persecution, was not only without

blemish, but distinguished for a high degree of sanctity. The causes which led to their lapse from this fair height, however, date from so early a period as the fourth century, when Constantine, to the irrecoverable downfall of Paganism, established the Christian Church as the religion of the State, and invested it, as a consequence, with certain temporal advantages. During the succeeding reigns of Theodosius and the Valentinians, the power of the Popes of Rome was farther extended, and their revenues largely increased by the donations of princes and zealous persons to the different churches. The establishment of the order of St. Basil, about this period, was another cause which added to the Papal influence, all orders being in their nature subservient to the authority that created them. Notwithstanding all this aggrandizement, however, the Roman Episcopi had as yet obtained no territory in sovereignty; all they had gained, in fact, amounted to the acknowledged supremacy of Rome over the West in spiritual matters, and the transference of disputes for decision, to a superior court established there. Though the Patriarch of Constantinople claimed equality of rights with him of Rome soon after the transference of the seat of empire, the Greeks themselves continued for a long period to

acknowledge the general supremacy of the Roman Pontiff.

It was not till the dispute concerning images in the eighth century, between Rome and the Greek emperor Leo, the Isaurean (not to enter further into these disputes, than as they are connected with the narrative,) that Stephen II., by calling in King Pepin of France against Astolpho, King of the Lombards, actually, and for the first time, acquired temporal power and territory. The first stone thus laid, the rest of the stupendous fabric of the Papal power occupied much less time in its erection. It is, indeed, in the next pontificate of Adrian the First, that we find Charlemagne establishing the legitimate claim of the Clergy to tithes, and bestowing extensive territories about Ravenna and Remini on the Holy See.

Here first begins the degeneracy of the Sovereign pontiffs in sanctity of life and humility of deportment, simultaneous, curiously enough with the acquisition of wealth. Immediately afterwards, that is to say, during the greater part of the ninth and tenth centuries, followed the most disgraceful period in the history of the Pontificate. It is but justice to state, however, that the period alluded to, was marked by the irruptions into different

countries of Europe of the terrible Saracen powers, from without, whilst society was distracted from within, by the sanguinary contests and systematic depredations of the rapacious feudal Barons; the moral fabric of society was universally in ruins, and it is not unfair to presume, that if the clergy occupy the most prominent places in the picture of demoralization which has been handed down to us, they only do so in virtue of the influence they possessed in their day, and the stronger relief in which they stood in relation to society at large, from their greater wealth and higher rank.

To these causes of degeneracy, the large and constantly increasing numbers of richly endowed monasteries, whose bishops and abbots being created temporal barons by Charlemagne and his successors, and thus induced to take more interest in the things of this world, than in those of the next, became a prolific and crowning source of clerical corruption. These circumstances being borne in mind, and the state of society in the latter part of the tenth century taken into the account, we are prepared to hear with less surprise that Theodora elevated her lover John X. to the tiara; and that Marozia, her sister, raised her second son, John XI. to the same, at that time, truly bad eminence; that one Pope,

John XII. was deposed as guilty of incest; that Boniface VII. was accused of murdering his predecessor; and that Benedict IX., another Simon Magus, was guilty of simony. These, and one or two more such as these, deserved not the name Papa or Father, but were real monsters in human shape as Bellarmine candidly admits. The Pontifical chair was but rarely thus disgracefully filled. Many who succeeded were both excellent and pious men. And now we arrive at the epoch when the great champion of the Popedom, Hildebrand, assumed the triple crown under the name of Gregory VII., the keen disputes between whom and the emperor Henry the Fourth of Germany, about investitures, rendered the close of the eleventh century for ever memorable. On the merits of this bitterly sustained contest, at the present day, there cannot be much difference of opinion. Gregory was probably right, when he desired to see the things spiritual separated from the jurisdiction of the merely temporal sovereign; but he was as certainly wrong when he sought to make the ring and crosier of his bishops a sign, not only of spiritual authority, but of temporal authority over the land attached to their Sees or Livings; the last, as being possessions of this world, naturally belonging to the Emperor, as the ultimate or

allodial proprietor. In the tenth and eleventh centuries the power of the bishops was paramount; but with the beginning of the twelfth, commences that extravagant dominion long successfully wielded by the Popes, and of which Gregory VII. must be regarded as the true founder. However much the inordinate ambition of this Pontiff is to be condemned, we must still recollect that Hildebrand entertained a sincere desire to reform the manners and morals of his clergy, and that his own general moral character was unimpeachable.

Taking the same high tone as Gregory VII. his immediate successors, Urban II. and Pascal II., maintained uninterrupted disputes with the same Henry the Fourth, and his son Henry the Fifth, about the unfortunate subject of investitures, until the matter was finally settled, to the great joy and pacification of Europe, by mutual concessions on both sides, at the Diet of Worms. The next remarkable instance of pontifical pride recorded, was that exhibited by Adrian IV. towards Frederick Barbarossa, whose stirrup, as he mounted his horse, was held by the emperor. Adrian was not haughty only, he was also munificent, at least, if we may judge from the gratuitous gift he made of Ireland to his countryman, Henry the Second of England. This English monarch

did not, however, find Alexander III., the successor of Adrian, either of so liberal or conciliatory a disposition, in his celebrated quarrel with Thomas à Becket, concerning the privileges of the English Clergy.

Innocent III. showed still less of apostolical humility, (after Hildebrand he is considered the second great champion of the Church,) for he carried his authority so far as to force Philip Augustus of France to take back his wife, and compelled John of England, and Peter of Arragon, to become his vassals. Against these papal encroachments, only two instances of successful resistance were offered,—to so low an ebb was kingly spirit sunk; the one was by St. Louis, who laid the first foundations of the Pragmatic Sanction, which subsequently enabled the Gallican Church to vindicate her independent rights; the other was by Henry II., who passed the Constitutions of Clarendon, some of the articles of which, if they can hardly be approved of, had at least the effect of checking clerical usurpations in his dominions for a time.

We now come to the papacy of Boniface VIII., who left all preceding Popes far behind in the race of ambition, and high tone of arrogant assumption. The moderate predecessors of this Pontiff only claimed

certain kingdoms as their property, partly by concession, and partly by right of their apostolical supremacy; but Boniface claimed the whole earth as his own—by hereditary title of lineal descent from St. Peter, which being a property held in fee from the King of Heaven for ever, he maintained he had full rights to enjoy it himself, during his natural life, or to cut it up, and portion it out to his obedient children, according to their deserts. The history of these Papal usurpations in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries conveys an important lesson: however fair the general moral character may be, and there is little, except in one or two instances, laid to the private charge of these usurping Pontiffs, we learn that there are few human beings, who when the temptations of power are presented to them, can confine themselves within any bounds, or resist the inclination to abuse their authority; if, therefore, their usurpations merit our condemnation, the sufferers, on the other hand, demand but a small portion of our pity, and in reviewing the vices of Henry the Fourth, the cruel tyranny of Frederick Barbarossa in Italy, the licentiousness of the accomplished Frederick the Second of Naples, and the weak depravity of John of England;—though we admit the injustice they suffered, we can feel little sympathy

for the losses of such despots. Whatever Italy may in former times have suffered in consequence of these contests, Rome never experienced such disasters as she did by the removal of the Popes to Avignon, in the fourteenth century; and if we are to believe Petrarch, Boccaccio, and some other Italian writers, so far were the Virtues from gaining by the change of climate, that it was during the long sojourn in France, that Clement V. and John XXII. exercised their rapaciousness, and what was still worse, that Clement VI. indulged in licentiousness, though he is praised by Petrarch, for his accomplishments and talents. Shortly after this period, upon the return of Urban V. to Rome, the celebrated disunion of the Church, called the great schism of the West, commencing between the rival Popes, Urban VI. and Clement VII.—(this Pope is not received by all, and was called Robert of Geneva, to distinguish him from Clement VII. of the Medici family,) and continuing for some time under their successors, gave great scandal to the Christian world. Whatever opprobrium may attach to the ambition of these different competitors for the Popedom, the different Princes of Europe deserve a still greater portion of blame, as the fruitful source of these disgraceful dissensions. They employed these rival Popes as their tools, and instead of trying to heal the wounds of

religion, kept them open to gratify their rapacious desire for augmentation of territory, or to increase their political influence. At last, after some fruitless attempts, Martin V. being elected at a general Council, held at Basle, terminated these unchristian disunions. The act of præmunire passed in the reign of Richard the Second of England, during the pontificate of Boniface, to prevent any Bulls being introduced into the kingdom, without the King's approbation, and the confirmation of the Pragmatic Sanction in France, were effectual barriers to the usurpations of the Popes, whose power was now rapidly on the decline.

The fifteenth century, and the greater part of the sixteenth, so noted for the Italian wars and foreign invasions, were still more unfortunately distinguished for the great relaxation of morals and church discipline. Leo X. was so much taken up with politics, and the pleasures of literature, which at last became too engrossing a pursuit, that he had no leisure to attend to his pastoral duties. By this blameable apathy to the interests of religion, and still more by his improperly granting indulgences partly to meet his natural profusion, but also for the more worthy object of assisting him in the erection of St. Peter's, he laid the foundation of that celebrated event in the history of the human race—the Reformation.

Adrian VI., the preceptor of Charles V., although of a different disposition, being severely religious, from the shortness of his reign, and his great inexperience of church affairs, was of as little use as his successors in appeasing the religious storm. Clement VII. was too much interested in confirming the power of his family at Florence, to reform the gross abuses of the church. Paul III., in the same spirit, was too busy in providing for his nephews in Parma and Placentia. Paul IV. was too bigoted, though a sincerely religious man, to conciliate the disaffected reformers. Paul V. and Julius III. were equally powerless in recalling their separated flock. It was not till the pontificate of Pius IV., that, under the guidance of his nephew, the pious and good Charles Borromeo, a real reform was introduced at the council of Trent, which had been sitting at intervals for several reigns, and a close put to that memorable and last of the general councils. Subsequently, Pius V., though over-zealous, or rather, to speak more properly, a persecutor, introduced still further reforms into the church, and Gregory XIII. the reformer of the calendar, and the energetic sexagenarian Sixtus Quintus, continued the good work. In short, the conduct of the Popes during the whole of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, if we except the

bigotry of a few, through mistaken zeal, was respectable, and generally not unworthy of commendation. During this period, nearly shorn of all political power, they had no other share in European politics, save as they encouraged one or other of the religious orders, who thus retained for them, in the different courts, indirectly, a shadow of their former influence. Thus Clement XI. (Albani,) for example, who published the Bull Unigenitus against the Jansenists, was partial to the Jesuits. Benedict XIII., a pious Dominican, favoured of course his own order. Benedict XIV., the enlightened Lambertini, again, did not like the Jesuits; but, to make amends, Clement XIII. was very fond of them, and supported them when proscribed by Portugal and France.

These facts, of no importance in the present day, had significance attached to them when these orders had such influence with the Catholic princes of former times. Clement XIV., (Ganganelli) to conclude this historical review, distinguished for his enlarged views, his liberality, (hence, I presume, called the Protestant Pope,) rendered his reign remarkable by the suppression of the Jesuits, and Pius VI. and VII. did honour to religion and their country, by the fortitude with which they bore their misfortunes, and the encouragement they extended to the fine arts.

APPENDIX.

A CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ OF THE EMINENT ITALIAN WRITERS IN LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.

FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

Preceded by the Troubadours of Provence, and the early native poets, Guittone D'Arezzo, Guido Delle Colonne, Brunetto Latini, and Guido Cavalcante, who flourished during the thirteenth century, and whose works are now nearly forgotten, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, by their creative genius, suddenly brought Italian poetry, during the fourteenth century, to an eminence which has no parallel in the annals of literature. But this having been already sufficiently shown, we shall confine ourselves to giving the names of these and a few other writers who appeared at this glorious birth of literature in Italy. The first we shall mention in this general catalogue, and summary of interesting facts, connected with the eminent writers of Italy and their works shall be

DANTE ALIGHIERI, born at Florence, in 1265; his works, *la Divina Commedia, Rime e Canzoni, la Vita Nuova, il Convito, De Monarchia,* in which he tries to prove from Scripture and reason that there should be one universal ruler on earth, viz. the Emperor;

De vulgari eloquentia; a paraphrase of the seven penitential Psalms, the Credo, the Pater-noster, and Ave-Maria. Died at Ravenna, 1321.

FRANCO SACCHETTI, born at Florence, 1335—imitated Boccaccio: 258 tales, some of them amusing, but chiefly valuable, as containing a history of the manners of his age. Died 1410.

GIOVANNI VILLANI, born at Florence at the end of the thirteenth century. The *History of Florence*—it begins with the creation of the world, and comes down to his own times, viz. 1348—a valuable authority.

FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

The fifteenth century was chiefly distinguished for the great attention given to learning, consisting, namely, in the profound study of Greek and Latin authors, with copious commentaries on the philosophy of Aristotle and Plato, and in a diligent cultivation of philology in all its branches; it may, indeed, be called the age of learning and learned men, to denote how barren it was in the productions of genius; yet, in the latter part of this century appeared a few of the great men who chiefly shone in the age of Leo X., whose writings seem to cheer the general dulness of the period under review. The invention of printing, and the discovery of the new world, will also ever render memorable the close of the fifteenth century.

ENEA SILVIO PICCOLOMINI, Pope Pius II., born in the territory of Sienna, in 1405. Of his different works, the most celebrated is *the History of his Own Times,* which chiefly relates to the Emperor Frederick III.

Marsilio Ficino, born at Florence in 1433; a great commentator on Plato, and one of the chief propagators of the Platonic philosophy in the fifteenth century.

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, born in 1463; a fine genius, often misapplied—an enthusiastic admirer of the Platonic philosophy. Died 1494.

Agnolo Poliziano, born at Montepulciano, in Tuscany, 1454, as great a restorer of learning as the preceding philosophers—a sweet poet also—*le Selve*, and a much-admired poem on the Tournament of Julian de Medici. Died 1494.

Luigi Pulci, born at Florence, 1431; the author of the *Morgante Maggiore*, the burlesque nature of which poem was not at first perceived—too much irreligion mingled with its pleasantries. Died 1487.

Paolo Toscanelli, born at Florence in 1397, a great astronomer and geographer—his knowledge of which sciences was of great service in drawing charts for Colombo. Died 1482.

Cristoforo Colombo, born in the State of Genoa, in 1441—his discovery of the West Indies, and the Continent of America. Died 1506.

Americo Vespucci, born 1451, at Florence; sailed into the Gulf of Paria, touched at the new Continent the year after Colombo, and gave his name to America.

Leonardo Da Vinci, born at the castle of Valdarno, near Florence, 1452—equally distinguished in philosophy, music, architecture, mechanics, and polite letters, but most of all in painting: founded the Milanese school of painting—*Trattato della Pittura*. Died 1520.

Jacopo Sannazaro, born in Naples, 1458—his works

are the *Pastoral Poem*, in prose and verse, *Arcadia*, the Latin Epic *De Partu Virginis*, and Piscatory Eclogues. Died 1530.

Lodovico Ariosto, born in Reggio in 1474—read little but the classics—rather absent in his habits—a profound student of nature—author of the *Orlando Furioso*, of several satires, and of the comedies *la Cassaria*, *i Suppositi*, *il Negromante*, *la Scolastica*, and *la Lena*. Died 1530.

Matteo Maria Bojardo, Count of Scandiano, born about 1434, at Scandiano, near Reggio—the author of the celebrated *Orlando Innamorato*. Died 1494.

Francesco Berni, born in 1490, at Lamporecchio, near Florence; *Orlando Innamorato*, Boiardo's poem greatly improved—a very facetious companion—greatly averse to labour. Died 1536.

SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

In the sixteenth century, which in letters may well be compared to the glorious era of Pericles in ancient Athens, no one department of art or science was left uncultivated. Epic poetry was carried to the highest perfection; not only were all species of ancient poetry,—the pastoral, the tragic, the comic, revived and modified by Italian genius, but new species were invented in the burlesque and macaronic by Berni, and Merlino Coccajo. History and politics were taught by Machiavelli and Guicciardini; and the arts under Michel Angelo and Raphael attained an eminence which, perhaps, they will never again reach.

At this time also arose the Commedie dell' Arte and Masks, which afterwards became so celebrated in Italy.

MICHEL ANGELO BUONARROTI, born 1474, in the township of Arezzo—architect, sculptor, painter, and poet—a sublime genius, and a very moral man—*Sonnetti.* Died at Rome, 1564.

PIETRO BEMBO, born 1470, at Venice—a Cardinal distinguished in poetry and prose—a great promoter of learning—the ornament of the court of Leo X. From Bembo came the phrase "to out Bembo Bembo."

BALDASSARE CASTIGLIONE, born 1478, at Casatico, a town in the Mantuan territory—his work, *il Cortigiano,* or rules to form a perfect courtier, is a very polished production. Died 1529.

GIO. GIORGIO TRISSINO, born 1478, at Vicenza—*L'Italia liberata dai Goti—Sofonisba,* a tragedy—*i Simillimi,* a comedy. Died 1550.

FRANCESCO GUICCARDINI, born 1482, at Florence—the *History of Florence from* 1492 *to his own times*—the most esteemed history of his native town—excellent in describing character; often too prolix, as in the war of Pisa. Died 1540.

GIROLAMO FRACASTORO, of Verona, born 1483; the author of the celebrated didactic Latin poem, *Syphilis*—a philosopher, poet, and physician. Died 1553.

PAOLO GIOVIO, born at Como, 1483; *History of his own times,* in Latin. Died 1552.

MATTEO BANDELLO, born 1501, at Castelnovo, in the Tortonese territory; a very agreeable novelist—The tale of Romeo and Juliet taken from him. Died 1561.

Pietro Aretino, born 1492, at Arezzo; *The Scourge of Princes*—Letters, and Comedies, *La Cortiginia, l' Ipocrito*—very licentious. His letters useful for the contemporaneous information they contain. Died 1557.

Marco Girolamo Vida, born 1490, at Cremona—Latin poem, *Cristiade; De Arte Poeticâ; De Dignitate Reipublicæ*, a prose dissertation—a noble Latin poet.

Luigi Alamanni, born 1495, at Florence;—*La Coltivazione*, a much admired poem on Agriculture—the introducer of blank verse into Italy—*Girone il Cortese*, an heroic poem—*Antigone*, a tragedy. Died 1556.

Bernardo Tasso, father of Tasso, born in 1493, in Bergamo—*Amadige*, a romantic epic. Died 1569.

Annibal Caro, born 1507, at Civita Nuova; translated the *Æneid* admirably into verso sciolto. D. 1566.

Giovanni Rucellai, born 1475, at Florence—*La Rosmunda* and *l'Oreste*, tragedies—his most famous work, *Le Api*, a didactic poem on bees. Died 1526.

Vittoria Colonna, Veronica Gambara, and Gaspara Stampa, celebrated female poets of the sixteenth century.

Ulisse Aldovrandi, born at Bologna, 1522; wrote on Insects, Birds, and Serpents—a great natural philosopher. Died 1606.

G. Batista Porta, born 1540, at Naples; *Della Magia Naturale*. Died 1615.

Bartolomeo Eustachio of Ancona, a famous anatomist—some of his works are lost, being unable from poverty to publish them, *De auditûs organis; Ossium examen, De Renibus, De Dentibus; Tabulæ Anatomicæ.*

Prospero Alpino, born 1553; introduced coffee—wrote on plants. Died 1617.

Sperone Speroni, born at Padua, in 1500; a Platonic metaphysician. Died 1588.

Benedetto Varchi, born 1502, at Florence—*Dialogo delle lingue*,—a great commentator on Dante and Petrarch—*Storia Fiorentina*. Died 1565.

Francesco Grazzini, called Il Lasca, born at Florence in 1503—comedies—novels entitled *Cene*, very sprightly, his best work. Died 1583.

Bernardo Davanzati, born at Florence, in 1539, had excellent ideas upon commerce, on agriculture, on money, one of the first economists. Died 1606.

Lodovico Castelvetro, born at Modena, in 1505—wrote commentaries, *Sulla Poetica di Aristotile*—a philosopher. Died 1571.

Girolamo Cardano, born at Pavia in 1501—a great algebraist and mathematician—wrote on weights and measures, failed for want of experiments.

Angelo da Costanzo, born at Naples, 1507—*the History of Naples*—a poet also. Died 1591.

Bernardino Rota, born at Naples, 1509, a poet.

Luigi Tansillo, born in 1510, at Nola, *Vendemmiatore—Le lagrime di san Pietro*, a sacred poem—compared to Petrarch. Died 1569.

Paolo Manuzio, born at Venice, 1512, a great antiquarian and lover of Cicero—a great printer.

Giorgio Vasari, born at Arezzo, 1512. The lives of the Italian painters—an invaluable work—partial to his master, Michel Angelo, and his school.

Giacomo Barocci da Vignola, born at Vignola,

1507; wrote on the five orders of architecture, and a treatise on the laws of perspective—built the Jesuits' Church at Rome. Died 1573.

ANDREA PALLADIO, born at Vicenza, 1518; built the Teatro Olimpico of his native town. His writings on architecture, and the beautiful palaces by which he has adorned the towns of Lombardy, have entitled him to be considered as the father of modern architecture—treatise on architecture, four books—antiquities of Rome.

CARLO SIGONIO, born at Modena, in 1524, a most learned antiquarian on Rome and Judea; *De regno Italiæ*. Died 1584.

BERNARDINO TELESIO, born at Cosenza, 1529; praised by Bacon as the first of moderns to interrogate nature by experiment. Died 1588.

GIO BATISTA GUARINI, born at Verona, 1557; *Il Pastor fido*—a charming pastoral. Died 1613.

CESARE BARONIO, the father of Church history, born in 1538, at Sora, a town of the kingdom of Naples; *Annales Ecclesiastici*, the history of the Church from Christ to 1198, in 12 volumes; he was induced to commence the work against the Centuriators of Magdeburgh. Died 1607.

GIRALDI CINTHIO, born at Ferrara, 1520; his tragedies,—*l'Orbecche*, King Sulmone murders his wife for incest, the chief incident—wrote one hundred novels—Shakspeare has borrowed from some of them.

LIONARDO SALVIATI, born at Florence, 1540; wrote a volume in quarto on a single sonnet of Petrarch, published a new edition of the Decameron—a great enemy of Tasso. Died 1589.

JACOPO MAZZONI, born in 1548, at Cesena; a fine writer on taste. Died 1598.

PAOLO PARUTA, born at Venice in 1540, historian —wrote from 1553 to 1557—*War of Cyprus*, very fair and luminous, not elegant—*Discorsi politici*. D. 1598.

PAOLO SARPI, (Father Paul,) born at Venice, in 1552, the forerunner of Locke—he had many of his ideas in metaphysics—wrote on optics, and on many physical subjects—stabbed from fanaticism—wrote on the rights of the Church, and on benefices—the History of the Council of Trent, his most famous work, considered partial by Catholics. Died 1623.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

On the fall of liberty at the end of the sixteenth century, fell also the fame of letters. The literature of the subsequent century, is chiefly noted for the affectation and bad taste with which it is disfigured: at the same time, the great and vigorous talent displayed in the romantic and comic epic productions of the Adonis, the Secchia Rapita, and Lo Scherno degli Dei, makes us regret that Marini, Tassoni, and Bracciolini, were not guided by a purer taste. To these general censures, however, the noble lyrical poetry of Chiabrera, Filicaja, and Guidi, form honourable exceptions; but this age was chiefly distinguished for the progress of the sciences: under Galileo and his pupils these attained an eminence which they had never reached before. The invention of the Opera, and the improvements introduced into music, will also make us always refer to this period with pleasure.

Ottavio Rinuccini of Florence, the father of the Opera, composed *La Dafne,* in 1595; *l'Euridice e l'Arianna,* the music by Jacopo Peri and Giulio Caccini—the last the inventor of recitative. Died 1621.

Gabriello Chiabrera, born at Savona, in 1552 infused the spirit of Grecian poetry into his muse; The Anacreon of Italy; *la Gotiade,* an epic poem, his *Rime* and *pastoral comedies.* Died 1637.

Santorio Santorio, born in 1561, at Capo d'Istria —the first to weigh the sensible and insensible perspiration—the first to apply the thermometer to the skin. Died 1636.

Galileo Galilei, born at Pisa, in 1564—first to apply the pendulum to clocks—invented the telescope —wrote on the Lunar disc—observed spots in the sun, and many new stars; his chief works *Il Saggiatore* and *Dialoghi del sistema del mondo*—very witty, very satirical upon Tasso—a little given to love—*Viri Galilei quid statis aspicientes in cœlum,* a text quoted to prove *his heresy,* which was foretold in Scripture. Died 1642.

Alessandro Tassoni, born in Modena, 1565—a poet—eccentric, fond of paradoxes—a great enemy of Petrarch—*la Secchia Rapita—the Rape of the Bucket* —a very comic, caustic, curious fellow. Died 1635.

F. Bracciolini, born at Pistoja, 1566; *Scherno degli Dei —the mockery of the Gods,* a comic epic poem. D. 1645.

Batista Lalli, born 1572, at Norcia; *l'Eneide travestita.* Died 1767.

Lorenzo Lippi, born 1606, at Florence—ridiculed martial exploits by employing low language—*Malman-*

tile riacquistato, or *the Capture of the Castle of Malmantile*—a comic epic. Died 1664.

Tommaso Campanella, born in Calabria, 1568—a moral and philosophical writer—*l'Ateismo Trionfato*—believed in magic—deemed heretical. Died 1639.

Guidobaldo Bonarelli, born 1563, at Urbino—wrote the beautiful pastoral drama, *la Filli di Sciro*.

Gio Batista Marini, born at Naples in 1569; greatly given to love; *l'Adone*, a romantic epic—an ingenious corrupter of taste. Died 1625.

Famiano Strada, born 1572, at Rome—*Storia della guerra di Fiandra*. Died 1649.

Enrico Caterino Davila, born 1576, at Sacco, a village in the Paduan territory—*Storia delle guerre civili di Francia*—too partial to the Medici—his battles very spirit-stirring—De Thou wrote on the same subject.

Raimondo Montecuccoli, born in 1608—a famous general—wrote on his own profession—much admired—*Opere, illustrate da Ugo Foscolo*. Died 1681.

Fulvio Testi, born in Ferrara, 1593—several odes, pretty. Died 1646.

Benedetto Castelli, born at Brescia, 1577—discovered the laws of running waters—the founder of hydrostatics. Died 1644.

Bonaventura Cavalieri, born 1598, at Milan—a Jesuit—*la Geometria Divisibilium*—a new Archimedes.

Sforza Pallavicino, a Jesuit, born 1598—*trattato del Bene e dello stile*—*the history of the Council of Trent*—a great supporter of the Popes. Died 1667.

Evangelista Torricelli, born at Faenza, in 1608

—discoverer of the barometer—proved the pressure of the atmosphere. Died 1647.

Alfonso Borelli, born in Naples, 1608—*De motu animalium*, or the laws of animal motion explained on mechanical principles. Died 1679.

Carlo Dati, born 1619, at Florence—*Veglie Fiorentine—Vite de' Pittori Antichi*—a most learned man—*Varrone Etrusco*. Died 1675.

Vicenzio Viviani, born at Florence, 1622—a great mathematician, philosopher, and a disciple of Galileo—*Divinazione di Apollonio*. Died 1703.

Domenico Cassini, born in the district of Nice, in 1625—made the meridian of Bologna and of Paris—observed the star Jupiter, his spots and his satellites, the first to observe the Zodiacal light. Died 1712.

Francesco Redi, born at Arezzo, 1626—a physician—a poet—a naturalist. Died 1697.

Marcello Malpighi, born in 1628, at Crevalcuore, in the district of Bologna; one of the first to point out the vessels and organization of plants—the papillæ of the tongue, the seat of the senses of taste, and touch, and the similarity in the organization of their instruments; discovered the structure of the conglomerate glands, observed the netlike filaments and longitudinal fibres of the bones, examined the fecundate egg, the internal structure of the silk-worm, &c. &c. Died 1694.

Francesco Lana, born in Brescia, 1631—the inventor of the air baloon—*Sua barca volante*. Died 1687.

Antonio Magliabecchi, born in Florence, in 1633—a most wonderful memory—a walking library.

VINCENZIO DA FILICAJA, born in Florence, 1642—his famous ode on the liberation of Vienna—greatly befriended by Christina of Sweden, who said he revived Petrarch without his faults—his beautiful sonnet on Italy. Died 1707.

ALESSANDRO GUIDI, born at Pavia, 1650—he imbibed the spirit of Pindar—his famous ode on *Fortune*—to the urn of Christina of Sweden; wrote dramas, *la Dafne e l'Endimione*, and *l'Amalasunta*. Died 1712.

MARIA LANCISI, born in Rome, 1654—physician—wrote on the movements of the heart, and *aneurisms*, *anatomy for design*. Died 1720.

FERDINANDO MARSIGLI, born at Bologna, in 1658—his chief work *Danubius Pannonico—Mysius Observationibus*—a great natural philosopher—founder of the Institute of Sciences at Bologna. Died 1730.

FRANCESCO BIANCHINI, born 1662, at Verona—wrote on universal history and on mathematics. Died 1729.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Literature revived nobly during the eighteenth century, and science continued to advance, particularly the natural sciences; a new epoch dawned in tragedy under Alfieri and Monti; in comedy Goldoni was the first to form a truly national theatre. Metastasio brought the opera to its highest point of perfection;—Genovesi, Carli, and Verri, developed the new science of political economy;—Morgagni, Valsalva, and Volta, extended the domains of medical and scientific knowledge; history and antiquities were unfolded with additional light by

Muratori, Giannone, Tiraboschi, Denina; and Gravina, Zeno, Bettinelli, Algarotti, and Baretti, wielded the sceptre of criticism, to the great advantage of letters.

Gio Mario De' Crescimbeni, born 1663, at Macerata—one of the founders of the Arcadian Society—his great work, *Storia della Volgar Poesia*—not a good poet, but extremely learned. Died 1728.

Gio Vincenzo Gravina, born in the province of Calabria, in 1664—wrote on jurisprudence—*Originum juris civilis, libri tres*—*Ragion poetica*—*De Censura*—*De Romano Imperio*—a great lawyer and critic. Died 1718.

Antonio Maria Valsalva, born in Imola, 1666, banished burning from surgery, the method then used to stop hemorrhages—made many discoveries in the ear —*Tractatus de aure*—a great anatomist. Died 1723.

Apostolo Zeno, born 1669, in Venice, a chief contributor to *Giornale de' Letterati d' Italia; la Ifigenia in Aulide*, his first drama—greatly caressed by the emperor Charles VI. of Germany — many operas — immense erudition. Died 1750.

Giambattista Vico, il Dante, della filosofia—born in Naples, 1668. Died 1744.

Lodovico Antonio Muratori, born at Vignola, in the Modenese territory, 1672—*Reflessioni sopra il buon gusto, Morale Filosofia, Antichità Estensi*, his great works, *Gli Annali d'Italia, Antichità Italiane, Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*—a most celebrated historian and antiquarian. Died 1750.

Nicolò Forteguerri, born in 1674, at Pistoja, *Il Ricciardetto*, a pleasant epic poem—translated *Terence*.

EUSTACHIO MANFREDI, born at Bologna, in 1674—a poet and philosopher. Died 1739.

SCIPIONE MAFFEI, born at Verona, 1675, he wrote in the *Giornale de' Letterati, Sue Osservazioni Letterarie*—his famous tragedy *la Merope*—and some comedies—his quarrel with Voltaire—*Istoria Diplomatica, Verona illustrata*—translated first book of the Iliad—various theological and mathematical works. Died 1755.

PIETRO GIANNONE, born at Ischitella, 1676, in the kingdom of Naples—*Storia Civile del Regno di Napoli,* —*Il Triregno*—obliged to leave Naples, being captured, made to retract his opinions inimical to the temporal supremacy of the Popes—died in the citadel of Torino —an honest independent historian of great merit—a true patriot. Died 1758.

MARIA QUIRINI, born at Venice, 1682—*La Storia Monastica dell' Italia.* Died 1759.

GIO BATISTA MORGAGNI, born at Forlì, 1680—prince of anatomists—most learned anatomical investigations—*De causis et sedibus morborum*—the chief founder of pathology—he was fond of praising himself—of extensive and varied learning. Died 1771.

PAOLO ROLLI, born at Rome, 1687—translated Milton —a good lyric poet—*was Italian preceptor in London.*

INNOCENZIO FRUGONI, born at Genoa, in 1692—a new school of poetry—too fond of heathen mythology. Died 1768.

MARCO FOSCARINI, born at Venice, 1698—*La Storia della Letteratura Venezziana*—a Venetian grandee.

ANTONIO MICHELI, born at Florence, 1679—a good botanist—*Nova genera plantarum.* Died 1737.

PIETRO METASTASIO, born at Rome, 1698—the first of operatic poets—his dramas acted in the extreme north and south; very systematic; fixed hours for composing; not ambitious of titles. Died 1782.

ODOARDO CORSINI, born at Fanano, in the Modenese territory, in 1702—a great antiquarian—*De Fasti Attici—Dissertazioni Agonistiche.* Died 1765.

BATISTA MARTINI, born in Bologna, 1706—wrote on music. Died 1784.

CARLO GOLDONI, the Moliere of Italy, born at Venice, 1707—wrote for France and Italy. Died 1793.

GIUSEPPE TARTINI, born in Istria, in 1692—*Trattato di musica—La Sonata del Diavolo.* Died 1770.

GIUSEPPE BOSOCVICH, born 1711, in Ragusa—*De inæqualitate gravitatis—De motu corporis attracti in centrum—Elementi di matematica*—wrote on various matters in philosophy. Died 1787.

FRANCESO ALGAROTTI, born at Venice, in 1712—six dialogues on the nature of light and colour—*Saggio sulla pittura, lettere sulla Russia—Neutonianismo per le Dame*—on political economy—made philosophy attractive, compared to Fontenelle. Died 1764.

ANTONIO GENOVESI, born near Salerno, 1712—*On Logic—Delle Scienze Metafisiche—Le Meditazioni filosofiche—Lezioni di Commercio*—New principles of political economy—a great metaphysician and economist. Died 1769.

GASPARE GOZZI, born in Venice, 1713—*Difesa di Dante—Il Trionfo dell' umiltà—l'Osservatore Veneto.*

CARLO PASSERONI, born in 1713, in the country of Nice—*Life of Cicero*, in poetry, greatly admired.

GIUSEPPE BARETTI, born in Torino, in 1716—*Frusta letteraria—his Dictionary and Italian Library*—a very caustic critic. Died 1789.

APPIANO BUONAFEDE, born at Commachio, 1716—*Della istoria e della indole d' ogni filosofia.* Died 1793.

PROSPERO MANARA, born at Borgo Taro, in the territory of Parma, in 1714—a lyric poet. Died 1800.

SAVERIO BETTINELLI, born at Mantua, in 1718—*Storia di Risorgimento d'Italia negli studi, e nelle arti* —praised by Ginguené. Died 1808.

GIAN RINALDO CARLI, born at Capo d'Istria early in the eighteenth century—a great economist—*Delle monete—Lettere Americane.* Died 1795.

ADEODATO TURCHI, born at Parma, in 1724—a great preacher. Died 1803.

FERDINANDO GALIANI, born in Puglia, in 1728—wrote on Vesuvius—*Dialoghi sul commercio de' grani,* his most noted work—*Beatissime pater, fac ut lapides isti panes fiant,* he said to the Pope, when presenting some mineralogical curiosities. Died 1787.

PIETRO VERRI, born at Milan, in 1728—*Meditazioni sulla economia politica—Storia di Milano*—A discourse upon the nature of pleasure and pain—a great economist. Died 1798.

TORELLI, born at Verona, 1721—a great admirer of Archimedes—a great mathematician—translated Gray's Elegy, and also portions of Plautus, Theocritus, and Catullus—a great lover of antiquity. Died 1781.

CARLO GOZZI, born at Venice, 1722—ridiculed Goldoni—condemned by Ginguené, praised by Mad. de Stael—a comic writer. Died 1806.

Francesco Milizia, architect, born 1725—wrote *The Lives of the Architects—The principles of civil architecture*, his best work. Died 1798.

Melchiorre Cesarotti, born 1730—the translator of Ossian, the beauties of which he was the first to point out to his countrymen, and of some of Voltaire's works, and some of Homer, very faulty—Satires of Juvenal—also of Demosthenes, diffuse and paraphrastical—an amiable man, without much original talent. Died 1808.

Carlo Giovanni Maria Denina, born at Rivello, in Piedmont, 1731—*Vicende della letteratura—Rivoluzioni d' Italia*, translated into most of the languages of Europe—*La clef des langues—Rivoluzioni della Germania—Istoria politica e letteraria della Grecia—La Russiade*, a poem—*Guide littéraire*—patronized by Frederick the Great. Died 1813.

Girolamo Pompei, born at Verona, 1731—a faithful translator of Plutarch's Lives—*Canzoni pastorali*—imitator of Theocritus, translated some of his Idyls, and also the *Eroidi di Ovidio—l'Ipermestra*, the first of his tragedies—a very moral man. Died 1788.

Girolomo Tiraboschi, born at Bergamo, 1731—very dry, very learned, very interesting on Petrarch—*Storia della Letteratura Italiana*—an invaluable work for reference. Died 1794.

Luigi Lanzi, born 1732—*Description of the Florence gallery—De' vasi antichi—Storia pittorica dell' Italia.*

Aurelio Bertola, of Rimini, a very graceful writer of fables. Died 1798.

Luigi Savioli, born at Bologna, 1729—a distinguished Anacreontic poet. Died 1804.

LORENZO PIGNOTTI, born at Arezzo, 1739, a very celebrated writer of fables. Died 1812.

GALVANI, born at Bologna, 1737—the discoverer of galvanism—his wife first observed the fact on which the science was founded—*De viribus electricitatis in motu musculari commentarius.* Died 1798.

ALESSANDRO VOLTA, born at Como, in 1745—A great cultivator of the science of electricity, which he investigated more scientifically than GALVANI—invented the electrical pile, &c. &c. Died 1826.

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

The nineteenth century has not declined from the renewed literary vigour of the preceding; the unities have been banished from tragedy by Manzoni and Pellico, and nature and a truer expression of passion substituted in their place, but nothing has perhaps more marked the present century than the introduction of the English novel, by Manzoni and Rosini. As yet the Italians have not learned to interweave a love-story with historic events; nor have they been happy in selecting character, or portraying it judiciously; but these imperfections, it is to be hoped, will be soon removed. Monti, Foscolo, Parini, Manzoni, Pindemonte, and Rossetti, have thrown the charms of poetry anew over their country; and Botta and Bossi have instructed it in history by their voluminous writings.

GIUSEPPE PARINI, born in the Milanese, 1729—*Il*

Mattino, il Meriggio, il Vespro, la Notte—a noble didactic poem, written to reform the corrupt manners of Italian society—many other works. Died 1799.

GIOVANNI BATISTO CASTI, born 1721, near Montefiascone—*Novelle galante*, in 3 vols., very witty, but very licentious—*Gli Animali parlanti*, his best work—Lord Byron has imitated his style occasionally. Died 1803.

ALESSANDRO VERRI, born at Milan, 1741—*Notti Romane*, a work full of the spirit of ancient Rome, and its great men. Died 1816.

GABRIELE ROSSETTI, born in Abruzzo, 1785—Patriotic Songs—*Iddio e l'uomo*, very noble and spirited poems—*Lo Spirito Antipapale*, a prose dissertation on the allegories of Dante—*Comment on the Divina Commedia.*

GIOVANNI ROSINI, Professor at Pisa—*La Monaca di Monza*—continuation of the *Promessi Sposi of Manzoni*, and *La Luisa Strozzi.*

JACOPO VITTORELLI, an agreeable living Anacreontic poet.

ANTONIO SCARPA, born 1746, in Lombardy—wrote on Aneurisms, on Hernia, on the Eye—a celebrated surgeon and anatomist. Died at Pavia, 1826.

LUIGI ROLANDO, born in Piedmont in 1773—*Saggio sopra la vera struttura del cervello*—a work highly prized by medical men.

JACOPO TOMMASINI, the scientific founder of the doctrine of Contrastimulation, introduced into Italy by Rasori, "that disease proceeds from excess of stimulus —*Della nuova doctrina Italiana*—*Delle febbri contagiose.*

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